May Day—Not M-Day *An Editorial*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

May 7, 1940

When We Were Drafted

by Morris Kamman

Reasons for Optimism

by Corliss Lamont

Karl Marx: Titan of the Poor

by William Blake

Red Adams Is a Fighting Man

by Anna Louise Strong

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Between Ourselves

YOUR NM editors have been getting around, talking with people about the problems of your magazine. We're taking something of a census on our own: how people feel about the paper, what the good and just-fair points are, what the average reader would like to see that isn't there. One of our editors spent an evening with some twenty-five teachers of the New York City schools. They were a representative group of that new generation of progressive young educators who have built their own union into the great, vibrant, fighting organization that it is today. These people are friends of NM in a general way, members of the middle-middle class.

One teacher commented that he had read each week's issue from cover to cover. Another man felt we had not made sufficiently clear (NM, April 16) that the Allied minelaying outside Norway merely precipitated the war; actually, the Germans had themselves fully prepared their own action in advance. Some teachers expressed an opinion we ourselves have held for some time: NM needs a richer, more popular style of writing, more reportage of what people are doing in addition to analysis and factual comment. Someone suggested that we were falling down on material that was not directly political. This particular woman thought that NM could use more articles like Stefan Rader's on Nylon, the new textile fabric. Most of them liked Anna Louise Strong's "Road across the Continent." It was human writing. Another teacher with whom we later chatted in the office wanted to see more pieces on cultural subjects, quite apart from the review and comment section.

These are a few opinions. We've been sitting around, after the May Day issue was out of the way, discussing these well taken points. It occurs to us we'd like to have more readers from out through the country have their say. What do you think of the paper—frankly? We know you find it indispensable. Certainly the support for our financial drive *($13,896.52 received thus far of the $25,000 we need immediately)* shows that. What improvements do you suggest? What features do you appreciate? Which ones strike you as less than worth while? Take a moment off to drop the editors a line: name names, hit straight from the shoulder. There's no better way of helping the editors edit your paper for you.

What's the state of things in *your* part of the nation? NM readers in California want to know what is happening in Maine. Alabama readers like anecdotes from Ohio and points north. That's why NM started a "State of the Nation" department three months ago with a group of reader-correspondents providing the material. It's been a success, judging from the letters we get. What's more, other readers are responding to our standing invitation to "send in contributions of significant happenings, anecdotes, etc." But we know just from looking over the nation's press that we are missing out on lots of lively stuff that deserves publication in the page we've reserved for just such things. We know that there is plenty more than gets into the newspaper columns.

Because we want those items, NM will reward readers who get them with a prize, a year's subscription to the magazine (or a best selling book if you already subscribe), for the best "State of the Nation" story sent in during the months of May and June. There's no rigid limitation on length, although stories should not run over two hundred words. They will be judged on the basis of nationwide appeal, uniqueness, and general readability. Some hints as to what our readers seem to like best: items of social import—everything from housing to child care—rank close to the top. Labor and political features come next. Humor and satire head the appeal list, with pointed anecdotes leading the class. We will, of course, print all acceptable stories whether or not they win the prize. Try your hand.

Cheers and greetings to our brother guildsmen for their great victory over the Hearst corporation in Chicago. When the news came in one of our editors took the morning off to celebrate. He has several friends among the active strikers who spent 508 days on the picketline. As he went out the door he said he wished old Heywood Broun were around to flash one of his ear-to-ear grins before sitting down to write his column of congratulations.

Mischa Richter's cartoon on page five of last week's issue appeared minus its caption, "The Middle Way," in the first few hundred copies run off the press. The illustration on page 20 of the same issue should be credited to John Heliker. Many apologies to both artists.

Who's Who

ROLFE HUMPHRIES was co-editor with M. J. Bernadete of the loyalist anthology, *And Spain Sings.* In 1938 he was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship in poetry. . . . William Blake, author of *An American Looks at Karl Marx* and two best selling novels, *The World Is Mine* and *The Painter and the Lady,* is at work on another novel dealing with the American Civil War. . . . Morris Kamman's writings have appeared in NM and other progressive periodicals. . . . C. S. Hall lives in Alabama and is active in the progressive movement in the South. . . . Anna Louise Strong is the author of *I Change Worlds, China's Millions,* and *One-fifth of Mankind: The Chinese Fight for Freedom.*

Flashbacks

MAY DAY, originating in the eight-hour day movement in Chicago in 1886, became the property of all workers in 1890 when the first international celebration took place. . . . By 1894 May 1 was a symbol of such significance that the army of the unemployed led by "General" Coxey chose to arrive in the nation's capital on that day. . . . Memo to Dubinsky who chose not to march in New York's May Day parade: Debs in 1907 said of May 1: "This is the first and only International Labor Day. It belongs to the working class and is dedicated to the revolution."

Corliss Lamont

Corliss Lamont, who studied at Harvard and Oxford Universities, is an old contributor to NM. He has traveled widely, especially in the USSR. In his recent book "You Might Like Socialism" he describes in detail how a change to the socialist system would solve the serious economic crisis facing the country. He is also the author of a philosophical work, "The Illusion of Immortality."

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXV MAY 7, 1940 NUMBER 7

May Day or M-Day?

MAY DAY is a day of banners, of men, women, and children marching in the cities of the world. This is the month when mankind stretches its limbs and the earth turns green and new life stirs. But there is no spring in the hearts of millions of common folk this year. Death is May queen and war marches in the streets and through the countryside.

May Day has sprung from the travail and hope of America. Born in 1886 in the bitter battle for the eight-hour day, baptized with the blood of the Haymarket martyrs, it has become the holiday of international labor, symbol of the fight for freedom everywhere. Over one-sixth of the earth May Day has conquered. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics every day belongs to emancipated labor. And every day belongs to peace. But in the capitalist five-sixths war or the threat of war invades every home. It sleeps in the beds of the poor, it eats at their tables, it stands between husband and wife, between youth and all the brightness of living.

What are you doing to drive this incubus from your home? The May Day banners spell peace. The streets throb to this cry. Peace—this is no mere word, but a way of life, the people's way. Against it is turned Wall Street's design for death. Which shall it be: May Day or M-Day?

There is a conspiracy afoot. It is the greatest conspiracy of our time. The full incredible truth about this conspiracy must be made known to millions. In Washington and Wall Street knowing looks are being passed. The wheels are being greased. Just the other day there was a glimpse of what is under way when an official of the American Association of Railroads made a slip and told the Senate Interstate Commerce Commission of the plans that have been made for transporting several million American soldiers to fight abroad. Do you realize what this means? If the rulers of America have their way, the poppies will be blowing over the corpses of American boys in some new Flanders field. "Irrespective of which party wins the election," wrote Jay Franklin, a leading journalist for the Roosevelt administration, in the April 15 issue of the New York *Post*, "it is the view of American military experts that this country will enter the war within a year."

Within a year! They are waiting till the election is over—as Wilson did. Eighty-eight percent of the American people, according to the latest *Fortune* survey, favor keeping out of war no matter what happens abroad. But the money lords and their Democratic and Republican accomplices have different plans. They are hoping to trick the American people into another 1917, another war for profit and imperialist greed. Jules Bache, New York financier and president of Dome Mines, Ltd., urged that the United States help the Allies "if for no other reason than that of good business." The brokers of gold and death all agree: bloody business is good business.

Good business for whom? For the dollar-a-day lads who will wallow in filth to be killed or maimed on foreign battlefields? For the men and women in the factories who will be told that they cannot "strike against the government" and must submit to the Girdlers and Weirs and Fords? For the unemployed whose relief will be slashed to the bone? For the farmers who will be regimented into producing for a market whose inevitable collapse will mean ruin? For the students who will be taught the science of murder and the lore of bullet and bayonet?

We are being told that we, the American people, have a stake in Greenland's icy wastes and the East Indies' rubber and tin. This is a lie, a cruel, cynical lie. These are the stakes of the Wall Street money lords, the Dillingers of international finance. The people's stake is at home.

Twelve million Americans are without jobs. Millions more live in poverty and insecurity. The answer to these problems is not—must not be—war. The American people have the will to peace. If we act, if we organize, if we live up to our best traditions, we can defeat the conspiracy against our peace. In every community, in every shop and office, in every trade union and club, in the colleges and high schools, on the farms—*organize*. Let us form Yanks Are Not Coming Committees. Let us band together politically as John L. Lewis has suggested, to confound the war stratagems of both old parties. There is still time to gather the strength that comes from the joining of many minds, many wills. To keep America out of war, to prevent a blackout of civil liberties, to end the madness of want amidst plenty—for these things the American people have only just begun to fight.

THE EDITORS.

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Reasons for Optimism

"I for one do not feel downcast about the future of mankind," Corliss Lamont writes. "We want peace and we want it now." His outlook in this season of tragedy.

THOUGH two large scale conflicts, one in the West and one in the East, are at present raging, spreading their blight farther and farther over the world, though the Roosevelt administration flirts with the idea of war on behalf of Anglo-American imperialism, though all the sad-eyed liberals weep their broken hearts into double scotch-and-sodas, though ex-radicals continue to recant, confess, and have nervous breakdowns, though loathed melancholy infests the atmosphere straight through from right to left, I for one do not feel downcast about the future of mankind as this spring of 1940 unfolds in all its turbulence and tragedy.

Optimism or pessimism regarding the broader social issues of the time is, in the large, a function of one's whole attitude toward economic and political affairs. Thus I write frankly as one who is not eager to have the capitalist system preserved, but instead welcomes the decline and fall of capitalism because that means the rise and triumph of socialism. At the risk of being called a wishful thinker, a cold-blooded intellectual, or something worse, I will state that through all the misery and violence of these times, through all the setbacks to human decency and progress, I can see good reasons for the spirit of optimism. For it seems to me that the tortured peoples of Europe and Asia may soon be in a position to strike off their bonds and to achieve decisive steps toward that socialist society which will bring them freedom, security, and peace.

THE REAL VICTOR

Barring the unlikely event of a quick and smashing victory in the European war for either the Allies or Nazi Germany, it looks very much to me as if no matter who wins, the real victor will be socialism. A long, protracted struggle, which seems highly probable at present, will leave both sides in a weakened, bankrupt, or near-bankrupt condition and faced with the genuine possibility of outright revolution from the left or an accelerated trend toward socialization in order to ride the storm. Already in Germany, partly under the stimulus of the Nazi-Soviet pact, there are abundant signs of a growing anti-capitalist feeling and radicalization among the masses. At the same time even those smaller nations which may yet prove able to stay out of the war are bound eventually to reach the exhaustion point from the terrific financial cost and nervous strain of their armed neutrality. And they, too, will not easily overcome their mounting social and economic crisis.

The continuation of the imperialist war, however, undoubtedly involving a holocaust of slaughter, is not something that I or any other sincere and humane radical desires. We want peace and we want it now. In the improbable event of our hopes being fulfilled by a negotiated settlement in the near future, with concessions on both the Allied and German sides, the movement toward socialism would, I believe, still remain the chief winner. With millions and millions of troops demobilized in the belligerent countries after a fiasco war, with all the peoples of Europe, except those of Soviet Russia, restive and ready for change, with the tremendous and overburdening increase in government debts, serious economic and political repercussions would immediately follow. The ever-present contradictions of European capitalism, shoved into the background only temporarily by armament expenditures and then by the war itself, would quickly come to the forefront again; so would class antagonisms, subdued during the war by the appeal to patriotism or throttled down by government repression. And economic contradictions together with class antagonisms, both greatly intensified as a result of the conflict, would react with redoubled force upon the strained and weakened structure of capitalist Europe, making socialism everywhere a major possibility.

An early peace, furthermore, would prevent the spread of Armageddon to the remaining neutrals; and we could rejoice that at least two great centers of civilization, the USA and the USSR, had definitely escaped involvement in the war. Such a peace would also make unlikely any *immediate* threat of a concerted capitalist attack on the Soviet Union, since, even as Dorothy Thompson admits, once peace has been declared in Europe, it will be next to impossible to rouse the masses of the people to an anti-Soviet crusade. Indeed, both the fascist and non-fascist governments would encounter far-reaching difficulties in leading their peoples soon again into international conflict of any sort and would to that extent be compelled to meet their pressing domestic problems at home instead of "sublimating" them in martial exploits abroad.

Turning to the Forgotten War in China, we can see plainly that the struggle there is working out more and more to the disadvantage of the chief capitalist power in the East, namely Japan. As the war on the Asiatic mainland nears the close of its third year and the untiring and all but innumerable Chinese forces continue to harass a stalemated foe, the strain on the capitalist economy of Japan grows ever more severe and the volume of opposition to the lagging imperialist adventure rises noticeably among all sections of the Mikado's population. Then, too, the coming of Nylon in America will now start to cut heavily into Nippon's foreign trade in silk, its major commercial source of dollar exchange. If events pursue their present course for long, Japanese capitalism should adopt as its national symbol a representation of the suicidal act of hara-kiri in place of the figure of the Rising Sun.

The immediate and sufficient ends of the many different elements united today under Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek are the liberation of China from the blood and iron of imperialism and the institution of a democratic republic. Yet it cannot be forgotten that in China, too, war is creating conditions that may well lead eventually in the direction of socialism. Among other things, the influence of Soviet Russia becomes inevitably more powerful as help from other sources diminishes; and the strength of the Chinese Communists, who control large areas in the northwestern part of the country, also steadily increases. Meantime, the disturbing impact of world events has of course penetrated beyond China and Japan to all the regions of Asia; and Britain's headache in agitated India indicates that radical changes are impending in that quarter of the globe.

ROLE OF THE USSR

But whatever may happen in the swiftly developing international scene, one solid fact of critical importance stands out crystal clear: Whether there is peace or war in Europe or in Asia, whether a revolutionary upsurge begins to stir here or there or anywhere, the neutral Soviet Union, fresh, relatively untouched by war, and growing stronger every day, will be in a position to throw its influence in support of truly liberating and progressive movements whenever and wherever they occur. In my opinion, it will be able, for instance, to check a German attempt to crush and dismember a defeated and revolutionary France or Britain, or an Allied attempt to crush and dismember a defeated and revolutionary Germany. If, as I hope, the crack of doom first descends upon the Nazi imperialists, we can be sure that the Soviet Union's physical contiguity to Germany, its ability to extend direct aid to the German radicals and the friendly feeling the German people now have for the Soviet Union will all count heavily. And no matter where the movement toward socialism receives its initial impulse, there is a fair chance that it will spread to the poverty-stricken, Slavophile peasants of the Balkans and to the wretched, restless populations of fascist Italy and Spain.

I am naturally assuming that the Soviet people and its leaders stand as steadfast as

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ever in their loyalty to the great aims of socialism. Amid all the numberless attacks in the past six months centering around the foreign policy of the USSR, I have not seen a single established fact presented that shows any retreat in the basic internal socialist policies of the Soviet people. Has the planned economy of the USSR shown signs of breaking down or disappearing? Are public ownership and operation of the means of production and distribution being abandoned? Were capitalist property relations preserved in the territory annexed from Poland and Finland? Is agriculture being de-collectivized? Is the Soviet government trying to halt the cultural advance of the people? Is race prejudice being encouraged? Has the great public health program been given up? Has the new constitution of 1936 been revoked?

The answer to all these questions is obviously an unqualified "No." Yet from reading the critics of Soviet Russia and especially leftists gone sour, you would think that socialism had entirely and permanently gone into the discard in the USSR. For the anti-Soviet chorus of jittery journalists on the run, the USSR's alleged wrongful acts on the international scene automatically cancel out all the splendid and genuinely socialist achievements of the Soviet people during the twenty-three years since the Revolution—achievements that such writers themselves were telling us about with enthusiasm not so long ago. The truth is that just as a number of American liberals felt themselves betrayed when they discovered that the Soviet Union was in no position to pose as a utopia in the conduct of its internal affairs, so now a new group has become disillusioned by discovering that the Soviet Union cannot afford to be utopian in the conduct of its *external* affairs in a very non-utopian world.

The USSR, face to face with imperialist wars dangerously close to both its eastern and western frontiers, has the obligation of acting simultaneously in such a way that socialism at home will be adequately safeguarded and socialism abroad definitely encouraged. Given these objectives, the Soviet government is surely justified in maneuvering this way and that through the gangster-ridden hell's kitchen of international politics and in taking every possible advantage of the antagonisms among the capitalist powers —antagonisms which moribund bourgeois statesmanship simply does not possess the capacity to surmount.

During the time when the Soviet Union was trying its best to work out a genuine peace front, based on the principle of collective security, with the governments of France and England, it never for a moment gave up its opposition to French and English *capitalism;* nor, when it signed the non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany, did it give up its opposition to German capitalism and to fascism in general. Another thing to be noted is that the USSR must pay strict attention to geography; it cannot, for instance, act as if it were bounded on both east and west by two immense oceans, like the United States. And Americans, especially, would do well to remember this point.

If the Soviet republics should make an occasional mistake in the most difficult process of steering a true Marxist course through the phenomenal complexities of these times, that certainly could not be surprising. Contrary to the impression of some of our more romantic radicals, there is no group of supermen, exempt from all human frailty, running Soviet Russia; nor has paradise-on-earth been established there. And it is clearly not necessary for a sincere friend of the Soviet Union to agree with its every act in foreign and domestic affairs, its every item of policy, from Finland to China, from the field of economic planning to that of education. The notion that, in regard to the USSR, one must approve of everything or nothing is simply preposterous.

Whatever the precise reasons for their retreat, many of those faint hearts and fickle minds who have recently become pessimistic over the future of socialism, a large proportion of them repudiating the socialist cause entirely or turning wrathfully upon the Soviet Union, will in my opinion live to regret their present panic psychology. They are making an even worse historical blunder than the English and American intellectuals who more than a century ago, under somewhat similar circumstances of international disorder and misunderstanding, turned against the great French Revolution. The classic examples during that former period were the English poets, Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge, all of whom were at first enthusiastic about the French republic and later became its bitter enemies and the friends of reaction in their own country.

Other Englishmen of the time felt much disheartened when after 1815, with the era of Metternich and the Holy Alliance, there came the temporary triumph of reaction throughout Europe. Now *that* was really something to be discouraged about, even though the principles of the Revolution in fact went marching on. It was as if today there had been a restoration of the Romanov dynasty in Russia and of similar regimes over the entire continent. How very much better the Russian Revolution and the cause of socialism in general are faring!

These, then, are my grounds for optimism. Naturally, events may prove my analysis and my predictions far astray. There might be some sudden shift in the Far Eastern line-up, for instance. There is still the possibility of the United States' or Soviet Russia's becoming embroiled in the European war, eventualities which would not necessarily weaken socialist prospects in the long run. Indeed, the much talked of Allied onslaught upon the USSR might well turn out to be a suicidal step for the Anglo-French sector of capitalism to take.

As for America, I have not tried to evaluate the general situation here, though I believe that there is much to be hopeful about and that we can make the transition to the new society in a reasonable, peaceful, and democratic manner.

Meanwhile the specter of socialism quite justifiably haunts not merely the ruling classes of Europe, but those of the entire capitalist and colonial world. For the struggling peoples of the earth, however, aspiring always toward a freer and more abundant life, this is no specter, but the figure of hope approaching from an horizon no longer distant.

CORLISS LAMONT.

Crucial Admission

"STALIN did not join the Franco-British alliance because he believed, correctly enough, that Russia would receive the brunt of the attack, and because he feared, not without some justification, that the Western powers might be tempted to let the war become an anti-Communist crusade." *Walter Lippmann discussing the Soviet position, New York "Herald Tribune," April 20.*

Sounds like NEW MASSES six months ago, doesn't it? Better late than never, we suppose.

Black, Orange, White

At Ocotlan I saw the torches flare
From the train window, orange on black, at night,
Orange over orange, fire on fruit,
The trays of great bright globes going window high
Along the wall of cars, and the ground all white,
Sand in Mexican moonlight, cold enough for snow.

This comes home, as I stop my car in line
On the dark state road, in an hour when snow begins
To dust the hard concrete, and the mountain slopes
Are white except for the ledges and the trees;
And torches flare over black river water
Where troopers fish for a suicide by drowning
And bring him, cold, to the cold Connecticut shore.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

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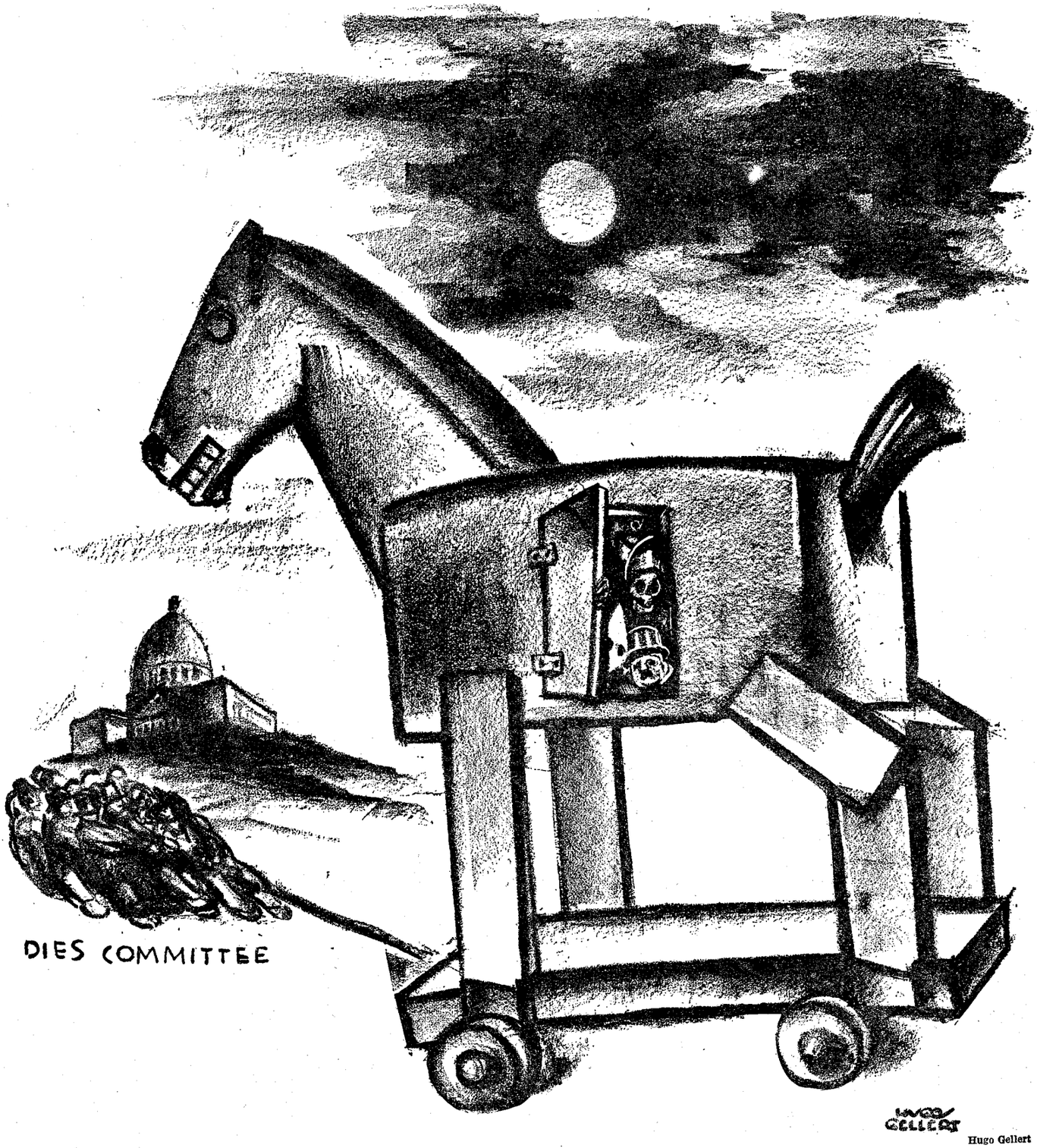

Hugo Gellert

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Karl Marx: Titan of the Poor

"He must be near his triumph," William Blake writes on Marx's 122nd anniversary. Born May 5, 1818, he lies in London's Highgate Cemetery. The real man.

HIGHGATE CEMETERY in London lies above the dirt-laden fogs of the lower city. It nestles on the side of a hill whose prim, red brick houses abound with legends of Gunpowder Plot, of Cromwell, and of his son-in-law, Ireton. Years ago, when London was still comprehensible, Highgate was a summer resort for the wealthy burgesses of the port. Today it is a strange nondescript of old, stodgy, Victorian homes, Georgian streets, brand-new American flats, jerrybuilt ribbon dwellings of lath and plaster and, at the foot, despairing slums. Every type of London dwelling for every social class can be found within a few hundred yards of the cemetery gate.

One enters under a modest stone arch. Immediately to the right the visitor sees two of the most stupendous and expensive mausoleums among the world's plutocratic resting places. The shining brown pharaoh's palace on the north is that of Lord Dalziel of Wooler, overlord of British Pullmans. The one on the south is that of plain Donald Smith, who crumbles as Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, railroad king of Canada and the Dakotas. No monuments compare with theirs and by social logic one must assume that they are the greatest men buried there.

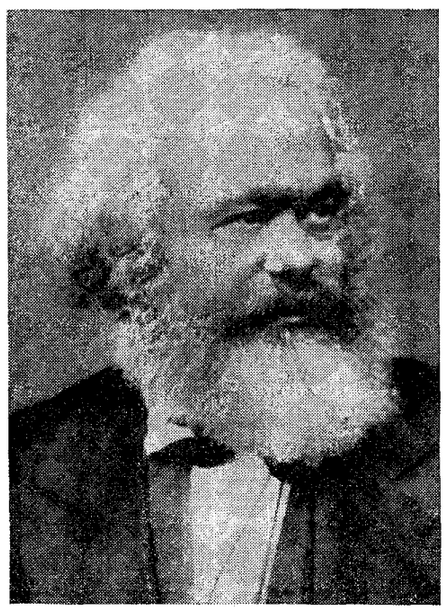
One comes quickly into ill cared-for stretches, plots of the less wealthy. The first monument that greets the eye is that of George Eliot, who sleeps alone, apart from her lifelong lover George Henry Lewes, because they were not married and British decency forbids scandal in eternity. The scrolled gravestone of George Jacob Holyoake, founder of workers' cooperatives, is the next reminder of liberalism. At the turn there is the heavy but simple monument to the prince of individualists and fierce opponent of socialism, the synthetic philosopher, Herbert Spencer. And, at the next turning, a few headstones down from the lane, Karl Marx!

It is a poor man's grave. He, his wife Jenny, his servant girl Helene Demuth, and a granddaughter are crowded in pocket-handkerchief space. The headstones are small. The plot is usually in wretched condition. The lawn has not been renewed these many years. I visited the grave three times during my long residence in London, and only once did I see a wreath. It carried a Russian inscription on a faded satin red ribbon, from a Workers' Marxist Study Circle in Moscow. It was rain soaked and so bedraggled that the gilded lettering was gone, only the outlines on the silk being visible.

I asked the old grave tender, was it visted often? "Once in a while you see a crowd here."

"Large?"

"Naw, a few."



KARL MARX. *The author of "Das Kapital" at the age of sixty.*

"Does someone visit it every day?"

"Nearly every day. One or two. But not much in winter."

I paid him a few shillings to freshen up the lawn and to place flowers in the urn.

From that graveside one can see the great sweep of London Town, that forest of stone, as Heine called it. The citadel of world capitalism, the towers of its imperialism, and the haven of its profits lie there. It was in London, that center of trade and finance, that Marx studied the system under which lived the three million men then gathered in its streets. The student, who had come from a Germany of little principalities, post chaises, and philosophers, illuminated the workings of that immense city. Today eight million men work in that maze of lanes and byways, subject to the laws discovered by the man sleeping on the hill.

No man has been insulted more than Marx. None has been more calumniated after his death. The resources of the dissecting room have been used to seek the causes of his idiosyncrasies. His jaundice, his liver disease, the maladies of father and uncles, the states of their bladders, and the contents of their pocketbooks have alike been probed. Prinz and Sombart study his psyche as consumed by hatred, envy, negativism (his use of words such as *anti*-Proudhon, *critique* of political economy). They say his is the bookworm mind, apart from the fresh joy in and witness of nature. Tcherkessov, an anarchist, accused Marx of stealing his ideas from Victor Considerant, holus-bolus. Not to be outdone, asinine persons, who know nothing of Marxian doctrines, accuse him of stealing "surplus value" from William Thompson.

His private life has been attacked. He was a cadger and a mendicant, the plague of the richer Engels' life. He was insolent to a fault. He looked at other men as nobodies. So testified Guillaume, the Bakuninist historian of the First International.

And at last, after fifty years of slander have done their work, no later than this winter one sees "Saint Karl-Marx" by Manuel Komroff, the perfect cento of ignorances, of revisionist bromides, a chronicle of superficiality and misknowledge, which ends on the high note that Marx filched Christmas gifts sent to his little girl! This masterpiece for which a schoolboy would be whipped for its amateur impudence, was inserted among the lubricious jokes of that organ of the proletariat, *Esquire*.

Poor old Papa Marx! His daughters were adored by the Newton of social science. He read Shakespeare, Balzac, and Racine to them as children. He made sure that they were not blue-stockings but became three of the most fascinating and intelligent women of their epoch—gifted, kind, wonderful wives of exceptional men. His wife, a noblewoman, renounced her brother, a Prussian minister, for this man. His servant girl viewed him as an earthly edition of the Heavenly Father and asked for no pay, so great was her joy in his service. His bourgeois uncles, the merchant Philips of Rotterdam above all, loved their wonderful nephew. Engels' affection for him is one of the few Damon and Pythias stories that hold water. Marx's affection for Engels' beloved, Mary Burns, made firmer that texture of long association. Those who showed throughout life that they comprehended his philosophy, like Weydemeyer, Sorge, Liebknecht, were unsparing in personal adoration.

Of course he was choleric and attacked like a wild boar. Of course, when old friends left the cause, he assailed them. But if his silly critics will look at the then state of German and French polemics, in which he was educated, they will note that Marx is practically the most urbane and polished controversialist of that acrid period. And if in England debate was more pleasing, it was because nothing was argued. Marx wrote to Lavrov to come to England where he would be safe. In Paris, he said, the police arrested people for dangerous ideas. In London the police had no inkling that there could be any ideas, dangerous or otherwise. No, the man who cut the *Kalbsbraten* on Sundays inserted them in thick slices of rye bread, bought the lager beer with his last pennies, and then took a cargo of friends and children to Jack Straw's Castle on Hampstead Heath was a vigorous

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Santa Claus. The artist intoxicated with the Greek drama, the reciter of *Richard III* and *Timon of Athens,* the man who smashed lamp posts on Saturday night to scandalize bobbies, like a college student, was no stuffed library pedant.

When real genius came forward, as in Darwin's *Origin of Species* in that wondrous year 1859, Marx bowed before a conscientious mind. He knew the Malthusian assumptions but he rose above Darwin's sources to measure Darwin's achievement. When Balzac, a royalist, laid bare the nerves and tissues of the bourgeoisie, his devotee was Karl Marx.

Socialists produced variant philosophies Marx thought unsound. But if he felt that the work was animated by a sincere love of the working class and was not noxious, he applauded. Witness his sympathy for that inspired *Pfuscher* Dietzgen. Note his tribute to the followers of brave old Blanqui, heroes of the Commune. Mark his honest admiration for the integrity of the Proudhonists in the Commune, whose principles he detested.

For Marx there was no narrow dogmatism. A man who, in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* so admirably detected the spiritual nuances of every segment of the French nobility and bourgeoisie (as arising from their material foundations) is a miniature artist in delineating character to rival La Bruyere. To anyone who has checked the thousand references to numerous worthies in the three volumes of *Capital,* his skill at quick personal descriptions remains a marvel, a literary triumph. Witness his thumbnail sketches of Americans in his letters on our Civil War. They beggar the vaunted psychographs of Gamaliel Bradford, for they are set in a knowledge of material circumstance.

Not for nothing did Marx make his motto, "I am a human being, nothing human is alien to me." That excerpt from the old Roman comedy was dear to him. If he appeared cruel in his remarks on Schurz and Kugelmann, was not their later career as he prophesied? He foresaw the public future of every revolutionist and he caviled at conduct that foreshadowed it, not because he was informed by spleen, but because his eye carried a microscope slide of honesty and acute, detailed vision.

To those who wish to see the difference between Marx and the economists, let them look at the permutations and combinations of surplus value, as given in his chapter on the total law of surplus value. Suddenly he pitches out of the orbit of economic "theory" into the human needs of men, into their biological possibilities. No Ricardo, no boasted institutionalist, has ever so understood the interpenetration of summed-up theory and the living needs of men. No other man has so situated theory in a historic, that is, a human setting. No other theoretician has made material law subject to the creative will of a rising class. He never studied "laws of political economy" as the rules of the Medes and Persians. He annihilated the codes of science. He saw science as the plastic servant of man, whose consciousness of necessity was the springboard to freedom.

Marx's passion came from his deep belief that classless society, producing the true individual, would at last break down the barrier between man's soul and his surrounding institutions, that paradox of art since the liberating Renaissance. He carried the dream of Leonardo da Vinci to its scientific expression. That goal is human and inspiring. Marx restored the vision of Paradise, not in the realms of the dead, but in the living labor of communal man.

He must be near his triumph. The Soviet Union is the herald. When squealing ex-socialist revisionists, purer-than-the-pure revolutionists, etc., rush into print with one eye on the publication's check and the other on an alibi for future Gestapos, and simply strew the "intellectual" journals with refutations of the thrice-slain Marx, we must be near the great turning point at which, as Stalin has noted, certain governments, "ruling by the 'grace of God,'" will be missing.

Highgate Cemetery's buried leader of the workers can smile over the fatuities of Neville Chamberlain and prove again that the stupid quick are no match for the brilliant dead.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Gabriel in the London *Daily Worker*

"A specter is haunting Europe . . ."

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When We Were Drafted

Morris Kamman tells the heartbreaking story of conscription in 1917. The people did not want war. What happened to the peace movement. Its lessons for 1940.

"I'VE been drafted! They've drawn my number! What shall I do?"

The voices were hysterically pitched. It was right after the first drawing for the draft. Young fellows we had never seen before, who up until then had shunned us "Reds," now kept coming to our Socialist headquarters at Saint Paul, driven to us by their despair and the hope we could help them. They had read in the papers that we opposed the war and conscription. What did we think they ought to do? They didn't want to be conscripted. They didn't want to be shipped across.

But for all our good intentions, we of the Socialist Party in Minnesota were of scant practical help. The crisis had caught us, and for that matter the entire people, unprepared.

By now it is well known that Wilson's call for war was the inevitable fruit of his foreign policy and his diplomatic machinations. In 1916-17 we had not even begun to suspect it! Not until March 1917, after Wilson had ruptured diplomatic relations with Germany and demanded the arming of American merchantmen, did the fear arise that he was going to betray his pledge to keep us out of the war.

JANE ADDAMS

Then a committee of five, representing various pacifist groups and headed by that veteran pacifist, Jane Addams, intimate friend of the President, hurried to Washington to plead for the arbitration of our differences with Germany.

Three months earlier Miss Addams had dined with Woodrow Wilson at the White House. He had been cordial and witty, appreciative of the work she had done in his 1916 campaign. She had been radiantly happy at the dinner. With Wilson at the helm, the nation's peace, she felt, was assured. All America shared Miss Addams' optimism.

But when Miss Addams saw the President in March, he was neither cordial nor witty. He brushed aside her plea for arbitration. He spoke like a self-righteous and stern schoolmaster. He loved peace no less than she did, he lectured her. But a good peace may be best obtained by going to war.

Miss Addams and her four companions left the White House dazed and dejected. And now, when it was already too late, leading pacifists rushed from various parts of the country to New York, attempting to unify the multitude of small and ineffective peace groups in a last minute effort to head Wilson off from war. On the morning of April 2, ten thousand pacifists, wearing white tulips, descended upon Washington from New York and nearby cities for a "peace march" on the Capitol. They were stopped by the police. A delegation, led by David Starr Jordan, the noted educator, tried to reach the President. But the President had gone off to the golf links.

Late in the day the pacifists, still wearing the now wilted tulips, hired a hall for a mass meeting. While they were assembled within the four walls of the hall, President Wilson, addressing Congress at a joint session at night, called for war against Germany.

At the very first blast of the bugle most of the pacifist organizations fell apart like the walls of Jericho. Leading anti-war spokesmen, including Jane Addams herself, decided that it would be wrong to oppose the war once it had been declared. The American Peace Society, in existence since 1828, and the more recently established Carnegie Peace Foundation volunteered their services to Wilson. The cry went up: "Stand behind the President!"

SOCIALIST CONVENTION

Not until war itself had been declared and draft legislation was already before Congress did the Socialist Party leaders convene the emergency convention at Saint Louis. Precious time, urgently needed for mapping out a program to organize the membership and the American people for peace, was consumed in debate. One group wanted the convention to support the war. The majority, though antagonistic to the war, split on the then irrelevant question of whether defensive warfare was justifiable. Job Harriman, leader from California, pleaded with the delegates to maintain unity by adopting a resolution which would include all viewpoints expressed, regardless of their contradictory character. But a delegate from Connecticut jumped up and shouted angrily that if such a resolution were adopted, the people would consider the delegates a bunch of madmen. Finally a statement was adopted in opposition to the war and to conscription.

When this resolution came up for ratification at our Special Conference at Saint Paul, one of our leaders who always came to meetings wearing a blazing red tie, and who had been our perennial candidate for mayor, spoke against its adoption. There were tears in his eyes. He had a wife and two children to support. He couldn't risk going to prison. Today those very children, now of military age, may soon be faced with the very crisis from which their father shrank.

Similar incidents occurred all over the country. With few notable exceptions, the national leadership ran out on us. The burden of anti-war work was now shouldered by the left-wingers, young, courageous, but on the whole inexperienced. But this inexperience and tardy start were not the only handicaps. Bewildered by the cataclysmic turn of events, and with no established leadership to which they could turn, the people grasped at every optimistic straw. Warnings that Congress, if left to itself, would adopt conscription, were met with the remark, "They won't dare! Congress knows that free Americans won't stand for it!" This was the same sort of optimistic blah that had been spouted before war itself had been declared. "They won't dare! They know we're all opposed to going to war!"

The government, of course, knew of this deep and almost unanimous opposition. When the war declaration was put over, it was implied that only a volunteer army would be raised. Then, when the Draft Act was passed, there was talk that only a relatively small number would be selected for service from those who registered. Everyone of military age hoped he would be lucky—that his number wouldn't be drawn. Shrewdly, regular voting booths and local precinct boards were used for registration. The press drooled that registration for the draft was a duty no less solemn and no less pleasant than going to the same places to vote for national and local candidates. So, piecemeal, the war and the draft were clamped upon the people.

REGISTRATION RESISTED

Considerable resistance to registration developed throughout the country nonetheless. A good deal of this was the result of agitation by left wing Socialists. In Cleveland, under the leadership of Charles E. Ruthenberg, a deluge of leaflets urged the youth not to register. In Saint Paul leaflets with a similar message, were distributed in the dead of night, just prior to Registration Day. In Oregon and Washington, where the IWW was strong, only about half of the estimated number registered. In Oklahoma poor tenant farmers resisted the Draft Act with armed force. *Current Opinion* at that time stated that two of the farmers were killed and two hundred arrested before their armed resistance was stamped out. The government extended the time for registration and warned that those who failed to take advantage of the grace period would be subject to the death penalty. Many were intimidated, but the *Outlook,* a jingoist magazine, reported glumly in its June 13, 1917, issue that of those who did register more than 70 percent put in claims for exemption.

After the first drawing of numbers opposition to the draft approached a broad mass character. Farmers, workers, white collar as well as industrial, flocked to Socialist meet-

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ings. In rural Minnesota communities where Socialist candidates usually picked up only a handful of votes, our speakers addressed audiences of eight to ten thousand. Farmers, their wives and children came in autos and wagons from as far as thirty miles to camp in the fields waiting for the meeting to start. Our state was no exception. Everywhere there was a unanimity of feeling against the war and the draft. In local primaries in Dayton, O., during August 1917 Socialist candidates, running on an anti-war and anti-conscription platform, piled up more votes than the candidates of the other two tickets combined. In the fall mayoralty elections in New York City, the Socialist vote leaped by 400 percent. The Washington correspondent of the New York *Evening Post* admitted that from all parts of the country "comes the opinion . . . that there is not much genuine enthusiasm about the war. . . ."

The warmakers set afoot a huge campaign to frighten the people away from the radical organizations. The press blazed with charges that both the IWW and the Socialist Party were receiving big wads of dough from German sources. IWW members were accused of burning grain fields, poisoning canned foods, conducting mass industrial sabotage in order to help the kaiser. The comfortable editors of the *Nation* and the *New Republic,* who had scooted into the war camp with the greatest speed, echoed these shameful lies.

The hysterical agitation begot vigilante bands. Sometimes equipped with army rifles, they began breaking up our meetings. In Butte, Mont., John Little, member of the IWW Executive Board, was dragged from his bed by an armed, masked gang during the night and hanged to a railroad trestle.

PEACE ORGANIZATIONS RAIDED

The pro-war newspapers justified the vigilantes. The *Wall Street Journal* cried out for governmental suppression of the radical organizations. The general press raised the same cry. In September 1917 the Wilson administration, through its Department of Justice, swooped down on the IWW headquarters throughout the country. All the leaders were arrested and later convicted on charges of "sedition." Raids on Socialist headquarters followed. Those who agitated against the war and the draft were imprisoned. Our press was denied mailing privileges or was otherwise harassed. Isolated from one another, state and local organizations drifted into helplessness. Our meetings in many places were soon outlawed.

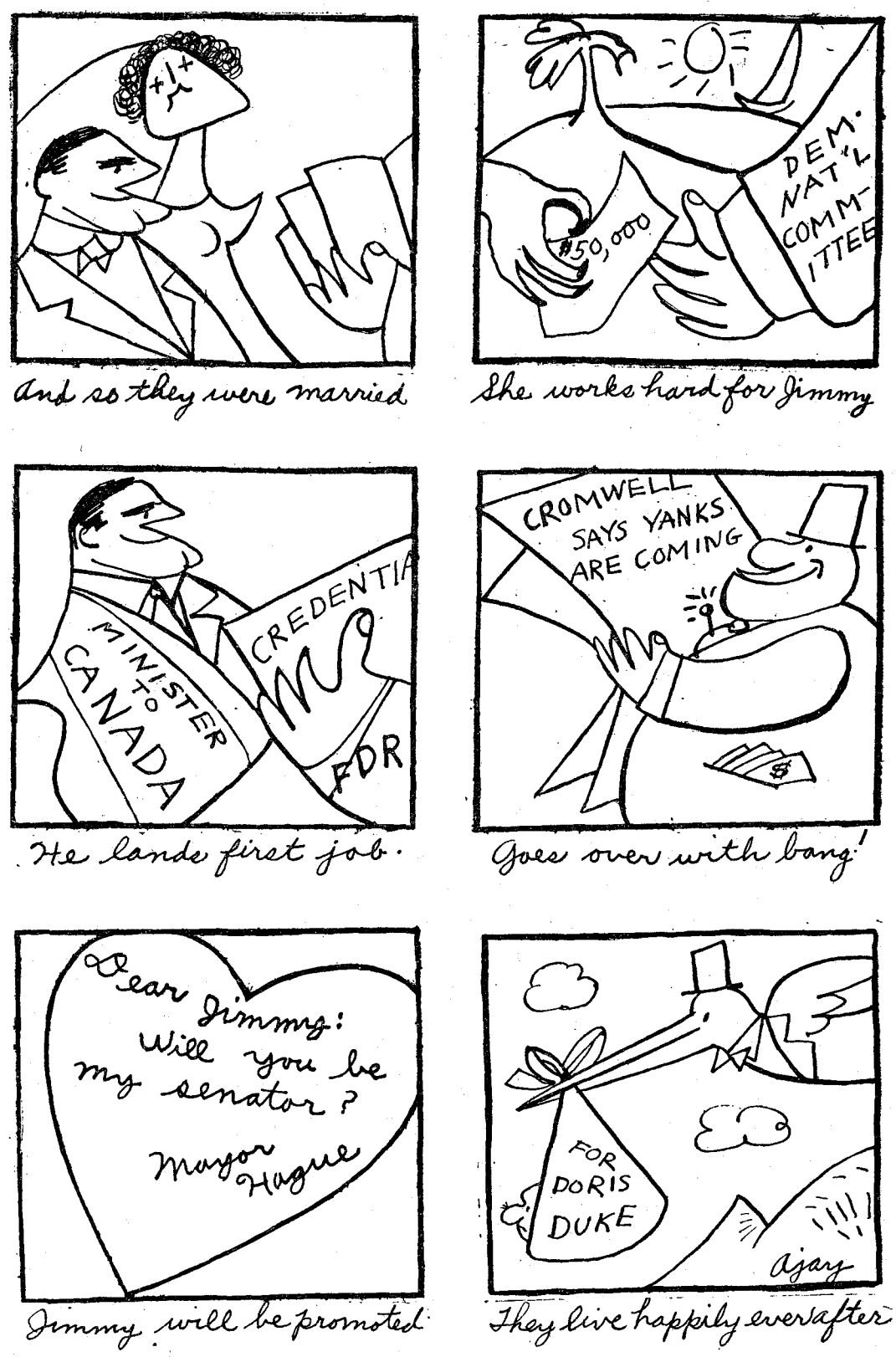
Even before the suppression of the two radical organizations it became apparent that both the IWW and the Socialist Party were unequal to the situation. Neither had attempted to build a broad peace front. The first confined its activity to its own limited membership. IWW members were warned that if they enlisted or submitted to the draft they would be expelled! There was a vague and vain syndicalist hope that somehow a general strike would break out to stop the war. The Socialists heatedly called for the immediate (and the impossible) overthrow of capitalism.

A broad and inclusive type of organization was needed desperately, the establishment of a nationwide people's peace front with which alone the warmakers could be stemmed, if they could be stemmed at all at such a late date.

One organization of this character, the People's Council, was hurriedly set up at a New York City conference at the end of May 1917 by delegates from forty-three states. Supporters of the Council included single-taxers, clergymen, rabbis, suffragists, educators, social workers, some labor leaders, Republicans, Democrats, and a few Socialist leaders, among them Eugene V. Debs.

At a packed and cheering mass meeting in Madison Square Garden, from which thousands had to be turned away, the organizing committee called for the formation of local branches of the Council and for a national convention at Minneapolis on September 1 to build up pressure for congressional repeal of the Draft Act and for an early peace without annexations and without indemnities.

Samuel Gompers, working hand in glove with the Wilson administration, ordered the



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trade unions to shun the Council's convention. The press now frothed that the People's Council, like the IWW and Socialist Party, had received German money. Leaders of the Council were branded traitors and foreign agents.

Nevertheless, nearly four hundred organizations of various types, from coast to coast and reaching into the deep South, with an estimated membership of two millions, affiliated to the Council within less than three months. Late in August a chartered train carrying several hundred delegates sped through the East for Minneapolis. From the Pacific Coast a similar train was heading for Minnesota, picking up delegates from the western areas. The National Security League, financed by big corporations, burned up the wires stimulating vigilante and governmental action to prevent the convention from taking place.

PASSING THE BUCK

Governor Burnquist of Minnesota, who had endeared himself to the Steel Trust by crushing a strike of miners on the Mesaba Range, issued an order forbidding the Council to convene at Minneapolis. The Administrative Board of the Council, which was on the eastern train, telegraphed the Socialist mayor of Milwaukee for permission to meet there. His reply was favorable. But a vigilante gang, hurriedly organized in that area, threatened violence, and the governor of Wisconsin also put his foot down and ordered the Council to stay away from that state. More telegrams were rushed by the Administrative Board. Governor Frazier, of North Dakota, who had been elected by the progressive farmers' Non-Partisan League, invited the Council to convene at Fargo. The mayor of that town immediately announced he had an augmented police force. He was prepared to drive the delegates from town.

After a tense meeting on board the eastern train, the delegates decided to head for Chicago. Mayor Thompson of Chicago, who was strongly anti-British, announced he would not interfere with the convention. A telegram was dispatched to the delegates on the western train to head for the Illinois city.

On September 1 the delegates, close to a thousand, opened the first session of the convention at Chicago. But the police, acting under special orders from the governor of Illinois, invaded the hall and dispersed the delegates and spectators. Angrily Mayor Thompson called the chief of police on the carpet and ordered him to permit the convention to be held.

The following day the delegates returned to the hall. The session had hardly been started when news came that the governor had ordered out three regiments of militia from Springfield, including artillery, to blow the convention up.

Excitement and uproar. Speeches were cut short. Nerve-jangled delegates kept looking at the doorways. The convention was turned into a tense race to complete business before the troops could arrive. There was time only to press through resolutions demanding repeal of the Draft Act, the preservation of civil liberties, and a call for an early and just peace. But there was no time in which to work out plans for achieving these aims, aims so deeply desired by the whole nation.

PEOPLE'S COUNCIL OUTLAWED

Swiftly, following the abrupt dissolution of the convention, laws were jammed through in cities and states outlawing the People's Council and its branches as seditious organizations. Those who had supported it were blacklisted and hounded as "traitors to America."

A gigantic hunt was set afoot for those who still resisted conscription. Augmented by members of self-constituted "patriotic" societies, agents of the Department of Justice invaded theaters and tore men from their wives, pulled drivers off milk wagons, yanked men off streetcars and hauled them away in trucks and patrol wagons to armories and jails as suspected "slackers." In New York City and vicinity 75,000 men were rounded up in this fashion in two days!

All this hit us with swift and bewildering suddenness. So it seemed in 1917. But it had all been in the making from the very moment President Wilson had approved Wall Street's plan for economic aid and credits to the Allies. Our economic entanglement was only the first step. The subsidized torrent of propaganda that the Allies were fighting for democracy, for the rights of small nations, eased the way for the second step—our military intervention.

We had failed to perceive this. We—labor, progressives, radicals, and pacifists—drifted along, aloof from each other, relying on our personal desires for peace, on our distance from the battlefields, on a "liberal" President to keep us out of the war.

We were still divided and drifting when war overtook us. In our first feverish efforts to turn back the tide we continued the same mistake of working in separate groups. Already well organized, the warmakers succeeded in mowing down the two most militant anti-war bodies, the IWW and left wing Socialists, with comparative ease.

TOO LATE

The People's Council was a brilliantly conceived and well planned movement to sweep the great masses of America into one peace organization. It came to life through the formation of broad peace groups in cities, states, and neighborhoods. It attained national dimension through the first conference at which labor leaders, progressives, radicals, and pacifists buried their differences and agreed upon a common, minimum program. By its appeal to the masses on that sole program, and by its inclusion of all groups and individuals, notwithstanding their politics, religion, race, the Council reared up in less than three months the framework of a formidable peace front. Had it been in existence earlier, it might have been the barrier against the threat of war and conscription. Coming too late, it could do pitifully little. It had not even sufficient time in which to solidify its component parts, to maintain the right of free assembly, the right to plead for an early and just peace.

The issues today are no different from the issues of 1917. The warmakers are moving just as swiftly—in fact, more swiftly. And they are working behind the people's backs, more cowardly in many ways than a generation before. Are we again to drift, without unity and without plan, until disaster overtakes us?

MORRIS KAMMAN.

The Guild Defeats Hearst

AS THE fifty-fourth annual convention of the American Newspaper Publishers Association faded out, came the dawn: the victory of the Hearst strikers in Chicago. The two were perhaps not directly related, yet the Hearst settlement was in a sense a pertinent and stirring postscript to the convention of the predominantly anti-union publishers.

The seventeen-month strike of the employees of Hearst's Chicago *Herald-American* was the longest and most bitterly fought in the history of the American Newspaper Guild. By the settlement—which came two weeks after the National Labor Relations Board had found the Hearst management guilty of unfair labor practices—the guild won a contract reinstating 116 of the 167 active strikers and providing dismissal pay totaling $24,000 for the rest. Some of those returning will receive higher wages, while nine guild members fired prior to the strike were reinstated. Negotiations for commercial department groups will begin May 7.

As for the publishers' convention, it was more than usually evasive of important issues. There were no red faces when Wade Werner, Associated Press correspondent, told the AP luncheon:

> Censored dispatches from Finland naturally were topheavy with damage to schools and hospitals, with casualties among civilians rather than among soldiers. Yet I honestly believe the Bolsheviks were not deliberately trying to bomb civilians.

A further insight into the role of the press is furnished by the annual report to the AP's board of directors by Kent Cooper, its general manager. It appears in *Editor and Publisher* of April 20. Mr. Cooper quotes with approval the following statement made by W. Rupert Davies, president of the Canadian Press, to that organization's board of directors:

> When I went into Europe for a four-week tour in August with Mr. Johnson, our London superintendent, I was of the opinion that some of the correspondents of the Associated Press might hold anti-British views or at least views unsympathetic to Britain. I came out of Europe after meeting all these men with the conviction that I was wrong and that for our differential of $20,000 paid to the Associated Press we are obtaining an excellent factual news service.

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Down on the Farm

The 32,000,000 in America's countryside look at the war and wonder. The government bulletins say the war "has diminished" export demand. Little farmer, what now?

SPRING has a double appeal down on the farm. There is first the freshness, the promise inherent in sprouts and thawing earth. There is, also, spring planting. For most of America's farmers fear of summer drought, early freezes, deflated markets, is still in the offing. The farmer looks forward. He considers the year that lies before him, the unpredictable year of 1940, and likely as not, he finds himself speculating by looking back a little. For the months since last September may hold the pattern of the farmer's future for the next year and longer. War has become the scarecrow in the fields which threatens, not the blackbirds, but the 32,000,000 farm population of America. And it is more than a scarecrow, for the threat is real; it is direct and active.

FDR'S HOPE

There are persons who profess to believe that the figure in the fields is really Lady Bountiful. Franklin D. Roosevelt in January recommended to Congress that it cut more than $400,000,000 from the farm budget this year, leaving out parity payments altogether. "I am influenced," he smiled, "by the hope that next year's crops can be sold by their producers for at least 75 percent of parity." War exports of farm produce were expected to take care of that. Besides, two billion dollars had to be found for an unprecedented arms program—*somebody* must take a slash in appropriations; why not the farmer, with the urban and rural unemployed?

The House of Representatives obediently reduced the farm appropriations, even nicking $66,900,000 off the President's estimate, and passed the buck to the Senate. By the time the bill got under discussion there it had begun to look as if Mars wasn't going to do right by our farmers after all. Britain and France had banned our exports of fruit and tobacco. No clamor was coming from overseas for American wheat and corn, pork and bacon. The Allies needed these things, yes, but they would get them from within their own empires or from other European nations—or do with less. From us they wanted planes, they wanted steel and iron, instruments of death. To buy these things they had to conserve their dollar exchange, not waste it on our surplus food. The Senate added about $299,000,000 to the House Farm Bill, restoring the parity payments. Even so the appropriations, which haven't yet taken final form, are about a third of a billion below current funds. Like FDR, some of our congressmen are still hopeful that war will write *finis* to America's everlasting farm problem.

This gambler's optimism may derive from memories of 1916-17, of $2.20 wheat, frenzied farm exports, invaluable acres of land. But this is not 1917—not yet, anyway—as our senators and representatives should know. Last December the secretary of agriculture warned: "It now appears that our exports in the current marketing year will be smaller than they would have been had the world remained at peace." Practically ever since the last world war nations have been preparing for this one. The Nazis' practices in world trade only served to accent the general economic warfare, in which the United States has been far from an innocent neutral. We have raised our tariffs, subsidized exports of wheat and cotton to get better than the world price, used chamber of commerce techniques—accompanied by the CC language of business "idealism"—to obtain markets in South America. Belligerents of the first world war laid plans to avoid getting caught short again. Our exports to Germany had dwindled off long before the present conflict began. Now Central Europe is virtually closed to us by the Allied blockade. Latin America? It needs industrial products, not agricultural. The Chamberlain and Reynaud governments rigidly control their empires' export and import trade, shuddering away from America's agricultural commodities. They use every trade trick possible—exchange control, simple bans on imports, government monopoly of buying and selling, preferential trade treaties—to conserve that precious dollar exchange for war materials. The London *Economist* reported on February 24:

> It is estimated that France's food supply can now be covered from home and colonial sources, leaving exportable surpluses of rice, cocoa, tea, rum, palm dates, mahogany, nickel, graphite, and salt. French colonies share the general colonial disadvantage of producing very few of the raw materials of industry but France reckons that her large colonial purchases, by saving foreign currency, will enable her to buy minerals and ores where they are available.

Our Department of Agriculture publishes a sort of Blue Book for farmers. Issued every month by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, this sky-colored little journal reports the hard inner facts of "The Agricultural Situation." Its language is cool, sedate, sometimes given to understatement. "European war," says the March 1940 bulletin on its cover page, "has not stimulated—it has diminished—the export demand for farm products. United States exports of tobacco and fruits have been greatly reduced—exports of pork and lard are not up to the volume that would flow normally in a year of large production and low prices—export sales of cotton have been good but have declined recently—little wheat is going abroad. See page 8 for table . . . " From the table on page 8 we discover that during the first five months of the war exports of almost every farm commodity except cotton fell substantially from the level of the same five months a year ago. And this while aircraft soared as fast as a plane itself—419 percent in December-January above the year before—while steel and iron sales abroad increased 111 percent over the previous year!

True, wheat has been doing nicely on the stock market. This is fine for the speculators, but why should we assume that it is equally good for the country's wheat farmers? The price of their grain is traditionally sensitive to "war news," yet the truth is that actual wheat exports were lower this past September-March period than for the same months the year before. In 1939 the world supply was two billion bushels above that of 1914. Wheat, like many farm products, is cultivated all over the world in places where it never grew before 1914. Early this year Britain purchased 61,000,000 bushels from Australia and an unannounced amount from Canada. Senator La-Follette of Wisconsin told his colleagues during debate on Cordell Hull's trade pacts that "Close cooperation between Britain and France carries with it the threat that our wheat may be excluded from their markets unless conforming to the prices they establish." The summer and winter drought, rather than war, is responsible for rising wheat prices.

COTTON

For several months after Europe's conflict began, export sales of cotton flourished. There was a rush to lay in reserves before shipping difficulties increased. Then: "British trade authorities have informed American officials," reported the Washington *Post* of March 25, "that the United Kingdom expects to curtail purchases of American cotton abroad. . . . The United Kingdom has been so far the largest recent importer of American cotton." Now Britain would rather purchase her cotton from South American countries, selling them the industrial products they used to purchase from Germany.

Tobacco farmers of the United States are doubly hit by John Bull's decision to save more for American war materials by buying tobacco from Turkey. Besides saying farewell to their $100,000,000 export trade, representing a third of the tobacco crop, the growers will probably lose about $12,000,000 on domestic sales because of lower prices resulting from the war. But the cigarette manufacturers are happy—they stand to make a sweet profit from that $12,000,000 reduction in their costs.

Canada and South Africa will supply the Britisher with his apple a day. And not only

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apples: our entire United Kingdom market for $18,000,000 of fresh fruit and $17,000,000 of preserved fruit is jeopardized by the empire's bans on American orchard produce.

Once we sold about 200,000,000 pounds of lard to Germany every year. Nazi war economy put a stop to that in 1934, and Chamberlain war economy threatens our remaining lard exports now. In fact, even before war broke out, American lard met increasing competition in the United Kingdom from foreign vegetable oils and whale oils. Last December, the fourth month of the war, our exports of bacon had fallen to 56 percent of the December 1938 level; ham exports to less than 50 percent; corn, to 21 percent; and barley to .015 percent.

REVIVAL?

Suppose, however, that the scenery is shifted, that Act II of World War I returns to the stage, opening with a variation on the "Feed Starving Belgium" scene. A revival of that old mellerdrammer is not out of the question. Already its hero, Herbert Hoover, waits in the wings, all made up for his role, while Franklin D. Roosevelt continues his quick progress understudying Woodrow Wilson. After all, warring nations cannot feed, or starve, their people forever. They may lose some of their food baskets outside the United States; Denmark has already gone to the Germans. Now the Allied Purchasing Commission is reported to be asking us for credits "to buy farm products only." (Dollars for planes, credits for food.) Friendly Frank is hardly likely to regard such a request as unreasonable, particularly since he must know that the time is near when he has to have some scheme that can be prettily and virtuously presented as an enticement to farmers to join in the Great Democratic Crusade.

Shall we, then, repeat 1916-17? Let us look back at that period a little: a halcyon era for farm prices, but not for farm purchasing power since the industrial products cost proportionately as much as before; land broken into and exhausted; wild speculation in farm real estate; sugar selling for 20 cents a pound; meatless and wheatless days; and, later, complete dislocation of world markets, "overproduction" that has stayed with us until today. Our farm administration in Washington claims that its acreage-control, ever-normal granary, and farm credit authority can prevent repetition of land exploitation and speculation as well as any threat of scarcity. Maybe. It's just a little hard to see these neat peacetime devices holding against the double hysteria of war crusading and the scramble for profits. Certainly such a situation will bring us closer than ever to the brink of the war precipice, from which we stand only a few inches away now. The farmer who is lucky enough not to lose his life on the battlefield may be able to sell his crop for more than he receives now; and how much will that benefit him with the zooming prices of non-agricultural products? Remember, too, that American agriculture is in an unhealthier state than it was just prior to the last world conflict—which left headaches that increased until, in 1932, the total farm cash income averaged $40 per farm person.

Since the first world war, American farmers have lost a foreign market representing the production of 35,000,000 acres. Mechanization has taken an unestimated toll in farm employment and in the market for feed crops. Nearly three million farm families subsist on the meager fruits of tenantry or the stony returns of sharecropping; nearly a million "migratories" make their dismal trek from crop to crop, from dust storms to vigilantes. Farm cash income last year was a billion dollars below that of 1937. The index of farm prices (taking the 1910-14 period as 100) ranged from 88 to 98; but the index of prices *paid* by the farmer was 119 to 122.

From the Republicans the Roosevelt administration inherited the perennial problem of "doing something about the farmers." It also fell heir to, and retained, the principle of approaching that problem through a system of bounties, export subsidies, enforced scarcity. It was less timid than the Republicans about actually putting these things through, perhaps because the farm picture in 1933 was more terrifying than the most extreme proposal for solving it, short of socialism. To be sure, the farmer was helped, though the essence of his tonic in those years came rather from a growth in national income. The beginning of a more progressive farm aid program was laid with some small appropriations for assisting tenant farmers, for rural electrification, emergency relief, farm credit. Now the President would abandon even this, cut off funds for it. "I am influenced by the hope . . ." he says.

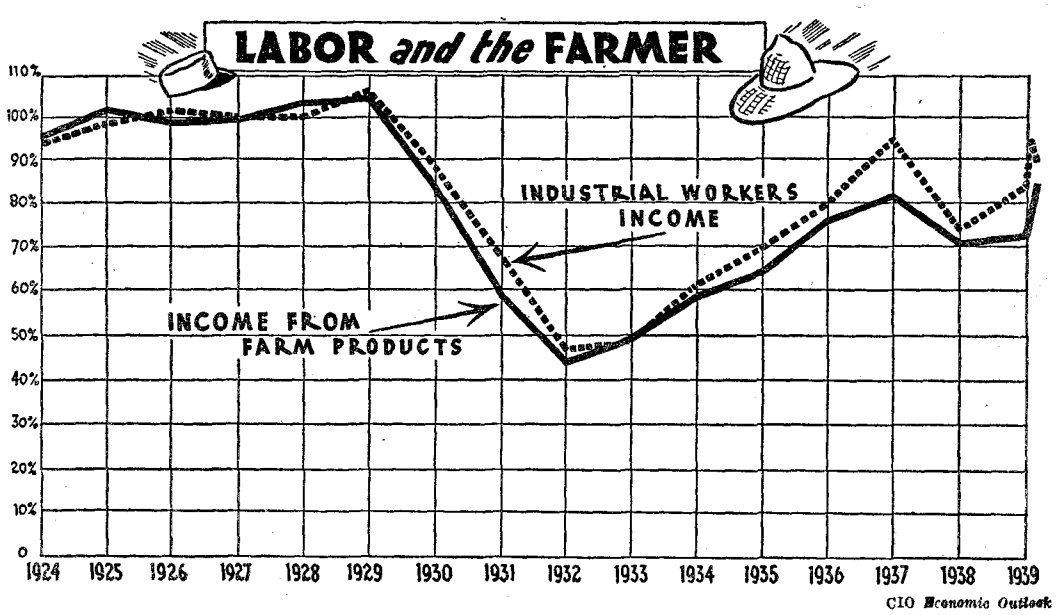
LESS THAN FOR PLANES

They call it a "billion dollar farm bill," those editors who echo the phrases of monopoly capital. It sounds like a tremendous amount, doesn't it?—as much as the aircraft manufacturers are expected to get from Allied war orders. Maybe it's a lot in proportion to farm cash income too, which was eight and a half billions for 1939, just 11 percent of the national income. It looks considerably smaller, however, beside the annual subsidy of six billions which industry indirectly derives from the Tariff Act—to say nothing of the billions that RFC has poured into banks and railroads.

NEW TYPE "FARMERS"

And isn't it a little ungrateful of big business to whimper about a system of farm relief that relieves the insurance companies? Take the case of farm parity payments, for example. Farmers have not achieved even 70 percent parity, i.e., the adjustment of their prices to bring them more nearly in line with industrial prices. But "parity" has profited the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.; in 1937 it got the largest parity payment, with the rest of the top sums going to other insurance companies (the farmer got an average of $75). Of course there are no more farmers in these companies than in Associated Farmers, Inc. They hold the farm land through mortgages and foreclosures. Cheerfully the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reports that probably *only* about one-third of the nation's farms are mortgaged. We might add that the farm mortgage debt is *only* a billion and a half dollars less than the farmers' total cash income for last year. Indeed, that seven billion dollar debt represents a reduction of two billions from 1930: a very nice reduction—effected through foreclosures and sales.

But if you think "parity" has some strange connotations, consider the word "surplus." For the past two decades it has been a bogy term in farm vocabulary. It is the word that FDR is most likely to use in his effort to turn the plowshares back into swords. "Surplus": meaning an abundance above what can be consumed. How fantastic, how actually obscene it must sound to our twelve million unemployed, to the WPA worker who spends



MUTUAL PROSPERITY STAKE. *Cash income from farm products and labor's income rise and fall together.*

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for food 42 cents of every dollar he gets and still goes hungry, because he hasn't enough dollars. John L. Lewis, in his speech last month to the United Mine Workers, spoke of the workers' eagerness to "become a natural market for the output of our agricultural population that finds itself unable to market its crops, because the people cannot buy." The answer to the "surplus" problem is as simple as that. Too simple for Mr. Roosevelt who, like Mr. Hoover, prefers the role of Great Humanitarian only when it is played overseas and in select theaters.

The embattled farmers of 1917 have learned much since that time. They have learned to suspect presidential candidates who talk of "bounties" and "restoring foreign markets" but cannot bring themselves to say, "Moratorium on farm debts; no evictions and foreclosures; adequate relief and social security for farm workers." They know that a labor union is not a city slicker device to rob them but a protection of farm prices through added purchasing power. Many of them are now embattled in unions of their own.

Glance at the chart on page 13. It represents labor's and the farmer's stake in peace, in resistance to war budgets and Pied Piper tunes of "war prosperity." It is a *mutual* stake. That is the important truth, the hope for 1940, down on the farm this spring.

BARBARA GILES.

War Psychosis in France

"THE war has not been without its effect on the minds of the French people," says the Paris correspondent of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (April 13 issue). The sentence turns out to be something of an understatement in view of the rest of the writer's report, which follows in part:

In one of the last sessions of the *Societe medico psychologique* the alienists exchanged their views on the connection between mobilization, war, and psychopathic reactions. Cases at the outbreak were rare and mostly of a hallucinatory character. . . . Those hospitalized showed only transient excitements. In general, they were indifferent and many even denied the existence of the war. . . . However, in some officers states of anxiety were observed, born of the fear lest they could not meet their responsibilities. At times delirium sprang from resistance to measures necessitated by the "blackout" or on occasion when alarms were sounded. Tanon described under the name of "gas obsession" some forty cases in which persons appeared at aid stations alleging that they had breathed yperite or some other toxic gas. . . . Another aspect of the influence of the war is the simulation of incapacity among soldiers. This ranges from exaggerations of real symptoms to the creation of all kinds of morbid phenomena.

Thought for the Week

HEADLINE in the *New Leader*, old guard Socialist rag, for April 20: "ALLY RESPECT FOR NEUTRAL RIGHTS JEOPARDIZES ALL SMALL STATES."

800,000 Strong

Nearly two million young Negroes have reached voting age in the South. What they decided at their Congress in New Orleans.

New Orleans, La.

IN THE South 800,000 young Negroes have reached voting age. Two issues are outstanding in their lives, no matter from which state or what group of society they come: jobs and full citizenship. Not only do they demand these rights; they are discussing and using techniques, instruments to obtain them. On April 18-21 "America's Most Interesting City" was host to one of the nation's most interesting meetings—not advertised by the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce—the Fourth Annual Conference of the All-Southern Negro Youth Congress. These native sons of the South showed that they do not propose to go the way of Bigger Thomas.

"As a people," said Edward Strong, the Congress' executive secretary, "we are chronically and permanently an unemployed people." The effect of the war has been to intensify that truth. The Allies' determination to buy as little American cotton as possible means probable ruin for hundreds of thousands of Negro people. Britain's ban on American tobacco will cut employment in that industry, where already there are 21 percent fewer workers than in 1939. Embargoes are playing hell with all American agriculture, where Negro employment is heavy.

It is an old Southern (ruling class) custom to disarm the Negro in the economic struggle by disfranchising him. This is done in a number of ways. In eight states the poll-tax barrier is insurmountable to most Negroes. Registration procedure is used in many states to prevent the Negro from voting. Then there are the "interpretation clauses" under which a prospective voter can be kept from the polls by being required, for example, to name the third assistant secretary of the navy under the thirteenth President of the United States. There are also states, like Texas, which hold "lily-white" primaries. In addition the threat of Klan violence stands between Negroes and the ballot box throughout Dixie.

RIGHT TO VOTE

How to defeat these tactics of "white supremacy"? The conference discussed mass mandamus proceedings, test cases in the courts, citizenship schools, organized mass registration and polling. Miami Negroes' successful resistance to disfranchisement was reported on by Sam Solomon, an undertaker. Confused as he is, distrustful of all whites, influenced by the local Republican machine, Solomon was able to unite the entire Miami Negro population in defense of their voting rights. Turning back a parade of seventy-five cars of klansmen, the Negroes went to the polls on election day. For the first time since Reconstruction they voted. "Brother," said a white man to an old Negro minister, "you see those white men there? Well, they're plenty mad." "Brother," retorted the minister, pointing to the Negroes who were voting, "you see those men? Well, they're plenty mad too." The Negro people, as Solomon pointed out, are not whispering about their rights any more.

Jobs and citizenship: to achieve these things the Negroes know they must have and do have allies among the white people. Not the Roosevelt administration, which hasn't lifted a finger to further the Anti-Lynching Bill or Geyer Anti-Poll Tax Bill. WPA jobs have been cut, youth aid curtailed, relief for tenants and sharecroppers pared. It was logical that the conference should accept John L. Lewis' invitation to unite with labor and the farming population for independent political action. The CIO was recognized as a means by which Negroes could obtain and hold jobs in equality with white workers. Possibilities of working through the Democratic primaries and the Republican Party were considered, but the conference plainly indicated that it regarded a third party as the real political hope of the Negro people of America.

PEACE SYMPOSIUM

These Negro Yanks are not coming. They made this clear during the peace symposium, which revealed the Negroes' understanding of British "democracy" as applied to the peoples of Ireland, India, and Africa, whose needs and aspirations are akin to the black man's in America. Rajni Patel of the All-India Congress and Dr. Max Yergan of the International Committee on African Affairs contributed to this understanding. During the last world war, Miss Augusta Jackson reminded delegates, Negroes were urged to enlist, in the name of democracy, and then subjected to indignities and abuse. In the two years following the Armistice ninety-six lynchings occurred. No wonder this conference passed a resolution condemning the present European conflict as an imperialist war and demanding that the administration cease giving any aid to belligerents, that America stay out of the war.

New Orleans is a Catholic stronghold; a large section of the city's Negro population is Catholic. Under the direction of the hierarchy, an opposition was organized within the conference, to create an impression of disunity. It failed. Although there were seventy Catholics among the delegates, on no point could the disrupters muster more than forty votes.

No, these Negro youths will not suffer Bigger Thomas' fate. They are the native sons and daughters of America's best traditions; they are a guarantee that these traditions shall live.

C. S. HALL.

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Red Adams Is A Fighting Man

Anna Louise Strong describes a union pioneer. "A bunch of vigilantes got a rope around my neck, and we had quite a tussle," he says. Road across the Continent II.

THE road from Sacramento rises swiftly. Leaving the summer heat of fruitful valleys, leaving the sleepy capital, we drove due east to the hills. The little towns died out and the gas stations grew expensive, and we came where deer scuttled over the highway as we passed. A hundred summits loomed, drew near, and dropped behind us into a widening sea of ever wilder forests. So range by range we rose and came at sunset over the highest pass and saw far down the fantastic beauty of Tahoe, sapphire blue with approaching dusk.

We were bound, Ruth Lowry and I, for the Oregon woods country where Ruth is a stockholder in one of the struggling mills. But we chose for its liveliness a zigzag way through the high wilderness of mountains that forms the eastern barrier of the Golden State. Here is the world's greatest natural playground. Two thousand miles it runs from Mexico to the Canadian border in a wide belt of snowpeaks, woods, and lakes. You could drop a dozen Switzerlands into it. Up this great backbone of the Pacific a score of national parks and national forests succeed each other, each more amazing than the last. Sequoia Park with the giant redwoods, Yosemite's waterfalls and canyons, Mount Lassen's live volcano, Crater Lake's matchless bowl of blue water, Rainier, the mountain that was God! No other land has such a vast two-thousand-mile people's playground, accessible to all.

VACATION LAND

To all? Not quite. It is true that the licenses on passing autos have some from every state, even from British Columbia and Alberta, to enjoy America's vacation land. It is true that many cars show relatively modest means, that beside the classy autos at the fifteen-dollar-a-day resorts there are dusty family trailers uncoupled in the public camps and even hiking groups in collective tents. But it is after all an upper and middle class public. The working class of even the nearby coastal cities lacks time or money to come here, while the still nearer farmhands who travel in jalopies north and south through the valleys avoid this beautiful wilderness. It costs them too much gas.

The life of America from the Pacific Coast eastward comes in long, thin layers; to each its different form of class war. It changes by successive mountain ranges more than by boundaries of "sovereign states." First come the men of the ports from San Pedro to Seattle; their maritime struggle leaps state limits. And near the ports, from San Diego up to Bellingham, the rain-soaked little farms lie green. They are fed by the coastal range which catches the first clouds from the sea and pours them westward. East of this range you come to a different country, the inland, irrigated valleys, America's most costly farms. Hot, dry, but marvelously fertile from the recent wedding of mountain water with virgin soil, they reach from Imperial Valley north through San Joaquin, Sacramento, Hood River, Yakima, Wenatchee. This is the land of the giant farm corporations, where small farmers worry over the cost of water and the prorating of their harvest sales, while landless farmhands fight for the right to eat. Eastward again lies this high mountain wall along which we are traveling. Two thousand miles long, and striking more than two miles into the sky, it seizes the last inland-blowing clouds, and turns them to snow and water power. On its seaward slope, sunny yet watered, is America's last and greatest timberland, containing the world's largest giant trees. But its landward slope is sharply cut off from moisture; here lie, from Death Valley north through Nevada, the great American deserts.

CLASS WAR IN THE HILLS

Here too in the high wilderness the class war rages, more violent perhaps than in the cities of the coast. Great private timber empires thrust themselves between the national forests; great mining corporations own the hills. Pioneer wars of sheep and cattle men for the range and of mining companies for claims are not long over; they were among America's bloodiest fights. They have been replaced by the fight for water power and irrigation water, and by struggles of miners and loggers against the companies which own whole counties and dictate their law. No intellectuals, no liberals live in the mining and logging areas to rationalize or mitigate the strife. They travel the high wilderness as auto tourists only, and never see the shacks of company towns. Property rights here are of recent and violent origin; the tradition that a "he-man" is a fighting man remains.

"Red" Adams is a fighting man; he fights through his trade union. We came on him half an hour beyond Truckee on the road to Reno; the road swings far out here into Nevada deserts to avoid the peaks before turning north. Merciless noon sun of the high arid country blazed on gray sagebrush and on hot dust of a road construction job. Red sat at the wheel of his ancient auto, talking to two of the roadbuilders. They were "Bocca Tunnel Workers," famous among Western roadbuilders as a fighting trade union, the only road construction gang organized under CIO. Red organized them. One by one, since 1937 when the Wagner act made labor organization legal, he has lovingly added members. He got them into the CIO quite naturally, for Red's own history dates back to the Western Federation of Miners and later the IWW, and he has always disdained the AFL. Finding no roadmakers' organization in the CIO, he argued that roadmaking in the high wilderness is a quarryman's job, and promptly got a charter from the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers.

I climbed into the shade inside Red's auto, and drove with him a dozen miles; he himself covers more than two hundred in his daily rounds of inspecting the work and settling disputes between foremen and men. He has five hundred members now, and is proud of them all. "Every guy here has a record hung on him for trade union activity," he said. "Some have been behind bars, some have been tarred and feathered by vigilantes. Not one was jailed for anything criminal but for organizing workers somewhere on the coast. Here is Mike Marliss, sent over the road in '34 for the General Strike in Frisco, John Larsen, jailed in the Yuma strike, 'Deacon Brown,' railroaded in the trouble on the Los Angeles aqueduct. Here's Harold Arrowsmith, clubbed out of Westwood in the 'July purge'; we've a lot of Westwood fellows here. Quite a number from the Salinas cotton strike, blacklisted in the valleys now. A lot of the boys are still doing time for the Grass Valley affair; they'll get jobs with us when they get out." Red has made his union a haven for the blacklisted and persecuted men of the Coast. "We've got a bunch of guys that know the value of a union," he said.

RED'S POLITICS

Red's nickname comes from the color of hair his mother gave him, but it suits also the color of politics he absorbed from the mining life of his youth. You go to jail for organizing workers—this is an axiom in the world he knows. You are lucky if you don't get killed for it. That sheriffs and judges should serve the bosses is to him in the nature of things. He doesn't even argue about it. It just is. He told me that he himself had spent a total of seven years in jail, and added proudly "always for organizing workers, never on a criminal charge." Seven years of Red's life are vital years of a strong man who loves freedom, loves it enough to go to jail for it. His present running fight is with the sheriff of Nevada County, notorious for anti-labor suppressions.

"Me and the sheriff had a battle at the last election," said Red, as we drove along the desert road in his battered auto. "He was running for office and I put out some stiff

(Continued on page 18)

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(Continued from page 15)

propaganda against him. We met over in town and he pulled a gun on me. But the nearest I was to death was in the Grass Valley fracas when the miners were organizing and the vigilantes turned out to stop it. A bunch of vigilantes got a rope around my neck—with the sheriff looking on—and were going to drag me by an auto. But the rope was a bit short and we had quite a tussle pulling me over. A friend of mine hit the sheriff on the chin and in the fight that followed I got the rope off my neck and escaped."

Not everyone escapes. "We had a fellow killed not long ago," said Red. "Bob Gray, secretary of our union, was shot between the eyes and thrown on the road. We don't know who did it; the authorities wouldn't investigate. There've been a lot of threats against me too." Red takes it as natural that the county authorities, who would not investigate Bob Gray's murder, should have "hung eighty-two years of jail sentences" on Red himself in the past two years. He merely said: "The sheriff has the habit."

"What were the sentences for?" I asked.

"A lot of nonsense," said Red. "He charged me once with kidnaping, about the worst crime in this state. What for? Well, one of the corporations sent a stoolpigeon into our workers' bunkhouse and a couple of us removed him and escorted him to the road. The sheriff called that kidnaping, and brought the case before old Judge Tuttle. That's the judge who kept the Cornishmen from getting their citizenship for thirty years."

In a swift digression from his own affairs Red told me that some eight hundred miners near Grass Valley and Nevada City were brought over from Cornwall thirty years ago by the mine owners to cut wages, and have never been able to get their citizenship papers in all these years. "Even if they find out how to apply, old Judge Tuttle won't give them. The mine owners want them to be aliens so they can hold the threat of deportation over them. Every little while they deport one to throw terror into the rest."

I pulled Red back to his own "kidnaping" case. "How did you get out of it with a judge like that?" I asked.

Red grinned. "When we elected Olson we put in Ellis H. Patterson as lieutenant governor. He's an old friend of mine. I sent him a wire and he just came up from Sacramento and sat in the courtroom. That's all he does, just sits there as an onlooker. But they can't pull their phony charges in the presence of a respectable lieutenant governor. Patterson's done that three times for me. Lately the highway patrolmen have stopped carrying out the sheriff's orders to arrest me, because even old Judge Tuttle has to throw the cases out of court."

A car of the state highway patrol drew near at one of our halts to pass the time of day with Red. The patrolman informed us casually that the sheriff had sent another warrant out. "But I didn't find you, Red," he grinned. Knowing the past reputation of the California state highway patrol for suppressing strikers, I asked him whether the Olson administration gave new orders. He evaded. He wanted me to think that he had always been a "good guy."

"We aren't so bad, are we, Red," he appealed to the labor organizer for confirmation. "In that Grass Valley fracas we threw more tear gas toward the sheriff than toward your fellows, now didn't we?" I had a sudden, shocking vision of a jealous chasm between different agencies of government, which Red, in the game of power politics, might use.

THE STRONGER MAN

But Red was not to be easily drawn. "I sure got a mouthful of it," he said, in noncommittal tones, refusing, but without discourtesy, the overture. It was clear that the patrolman catered to Red as a strong man, boss of five hundred fighting unionists, while Red looked upon him, not as the representative of "government," but as the tool of whatever masters were strong enough to own the law in the high wilderness.

Out into Nevada deserts we sweep, leaving Red Adams. Northward mile after mile. Not more than once an hour do we meet another auto on this lonely road on the backside of the high range. An empty land. Yet a land of strange beauty. The sagebrush changes to a hundred different shades of grey-green, from noon to dark with the moving shadows of the sun. Red rocks, black rocks glare at the glaring sand. Far ahead shimmers a white expanse of lake. Is it mirage or salt flats? Salt, we judge, since it fails to disappear. A narrow dusty trail cuts over the hills; it is marked: "Black Springs. Dancing every night." Who knows how far is Black Springs? A mile or a day? Another sign is more definite: "Eight miles to Hallelujah! Drink, dance, eat!" Among the barren spaces with not a house or human being visible, here is promise that eight miles away one may meet somebody and be sociable. A lonely land. A land yet to be conquered. But only by fighting men.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG.

Tighten Your Belt. Mischa Richter

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The State of the Nation

THIS DEPARTMENT, which NEW MASSES presents weekly, is the joint work of a group of correspondents who send us a letter each week telling about the state of their part of the nation. As more correspondents write in, our coverage will increase. We invite our readers to send their contributions of significant happenings, anecdotes, etc., to "The State of the Nation," NEW MASSES.

Song for the Little Flower

NEW YORK, N. Y.—New York librarians hit upon the cheerful idea of singing, via Western Union, their request to Mayor LaGuardia for higher salaries under the new city budget—but Western Union officials didn't like the song. It went like this, to the tune of "Happy Birthday to You":

> "We would like to have a raise
> And be paid for holidays;
> For the New York public libraries,
> We thank you and good day."

When the staff of the Fordham branch library submitted the song to one of Western Union's offices it was turned down. A member of the library staff called the company's executive office and was told that the message should have been accepted, but by the time she got back to the telegraph office to resubmit it Western Union officials had changed their minds and directed the manager of the office to turn it down. The librarians still want a raise of at least $10 a month.

Add Book Burning

BINGHAMTON, N. Y.—The book burning in Bradner, O., described in last week's "State of the Nation" is being duplicated here, by decision of the Board of Managers of the Board of Education. Harold Rugg's textbooks, which seem to be the current pet hate of Red-baiters, are destined for the bonfire. They "indoctrinate" the student with "Russian collectivism," according to the well known Franco admirer Merwin K. Hart, who made a speech here recently that led the Board of Managers to (1) discontinue use of the books in the schools and (2) burn them out of existence.

"Depression" Stories

SEATTLE, WASH.—Just a few news items to add to the statistical reports on "economic depression": Two women in a county jail here tried to commit suicide by slashing their arms. Resultant publicity revealed that one of them, Miss Maxine Names, had said she would rather turn to burglary than dishonor in order to keep herself and her brother from starvation. The other woman, Mrs. Lillian Johnson, had been arrested for forging a check to pay for the medical attention her husband needed. . . . Two men lost their lives in a double shooting, which authorities are investigating. One of the victims, fifty-six-year-old John Zolotun, had been suffering from illusions that someone was keeping him off the relief rolls. His wife said she had been afraid for some time that her husband was losing his mind.

Students' War vs. War

NORMAN, OKLA.—Initial casualty in the anti-ROTC war taking place on the University of Oklahoma campus was Andrew Kennedy, twenty-year-old sophomore, the first student ever to be expelled by the university for refusal to take compulsory military training. This expulsion of a conscientious objector was the signal for a campaign by anti-war forces in the form of petitions, editorial blasts, feature articles in the undergraduate publication, and an avalanche of indignant letters to the editor from alumni, coeds, and even ROTC students. Another anti-war campaign is being waged in the form of opposition to the ousting of E. N. Comfort, dean of the School of Religion, from his job as chaplain of the State Hospital at Norman. Dean Comfort was deposed as a result of pressure from the American Legion's top leadership, which didn't like his defense of civil liberties for Communists and Negroes.

Boston Begs to Differ

BOSTON, MASS.—When the hush-hush boys in the American Civil Liberties Union horsed through their now famous resolution banning Communists from offices in the organization, it didn't set with some Boston people who had fought hard in the Sacco-Vanzetti case. First off, the Civil Liberties Committee of Community Church, a non-sectarian organization which meets at Symphony Hall, passed a resolution condemning the action of the ACLU's National Executive Committee. Then the Civil Liberties Committee of the state took similar action. John Haynes Holmes of the national committee spent a weekend here trying to swing the local groups to withdraw their condemnation. The Bostonians listened to him politely but he didn't change their minds.

Ohio Bulletin

TOLEDO, O.—Owens-Illinois Glass reports net earnings of $8,884,066 for the twelve-month period ending March 31 last—equivalent to $3.34 per share as compared to $2.24 per share for the previous twelve months. . . . Roy Sherman, seeker of Republican nomination for Lucas County sheriff, promises to set up anti-Red Gestapo if elected. . . . Bowling Green city councilmen who have been quietly sniping at WPA have now decided to rid the city of it entirely, claiming WPA "takes control away from the community and brings in outside workers." About the only phase of WPA that merits any approval, according to Mr. Stalter, candidate for the Republican nomination for state representative from Wood County, is "that it provides jobs for the unemployed." . . . The Central Labor Union (AFL) blew up into a near-riot at a recent meeting when Oliver Myers, secretary of Toledo Building Trades Council, condemned officers of the Central Labor Union for failing to make a showing in their "most important work of fighting the CIO." Mr. Myers accused them of using money contributed to the "anti-CIO war chest" as an "organization fund." . . . At the same meeting the Toledo Pressmen's and Assistants Union, Local 55, in a letter to the council, announced it was quitting the AFL.

Minnesota Farmers

MONTEVIDEO, MINN.—At a mass meeting held here by several thousand farmers, representing seventeen western Minnesota counties, drastic resolutions were passed condemning the United States government's effort to haul destitute farmers into federal court to compel collections of old seed and feed loans made in the drought years 1933-35. The farmers claim that this money was appropriated by Congress and left to be spent by the relief administration for emergencies. Much of it was used throughout the country to relieve suffering, especially in urban and metropolitan centers, as well as throughout drought-stricken areas. In those three drought years thousands of cattle were killed under the government's supervision to prevent their starving to death. For years now the farmers, impoverished by the drought, have been incurring new debts in the effort to rebuild their herds.

Hard on the Gas Consumer

DETROIT, MICH.—During the 1937 city election campaign the CIO-sponsored labor ticket pointed out that Detroit householders were being cheated out of millions of dollars every year by the gas company, as the result of a political deal effected with the change-over from manufactured to natural gas. Local newspapers and other agencies of public expression put the hush-hush on this revelation. Now, nearly three years later, Mayor Jeffries says, "Our rates to the householders are just as high as they were before natural gas came to the city, or perhaps a little higher. The gas company is paying about the same for 1,000 BTU gas as they used to pay for 530 BTU gas, but they dilute the stronger gas and charge the consumers the same price. That means we are paying twice as much for gas as we were before, if you base your comparison on how much the gas company pays for it." In other words, for these many months Detroiters have been robbed of upwards of $50 a family.

The Yanks Are Not Coming movement is extending to the campus. Last week more than 3,000 students of the University of Michigan attended an outdoor rally to demand that America stay out of Europe's war and that neutrality legislation be tightened. The principal speaker was Senator Nye of North Dakota.

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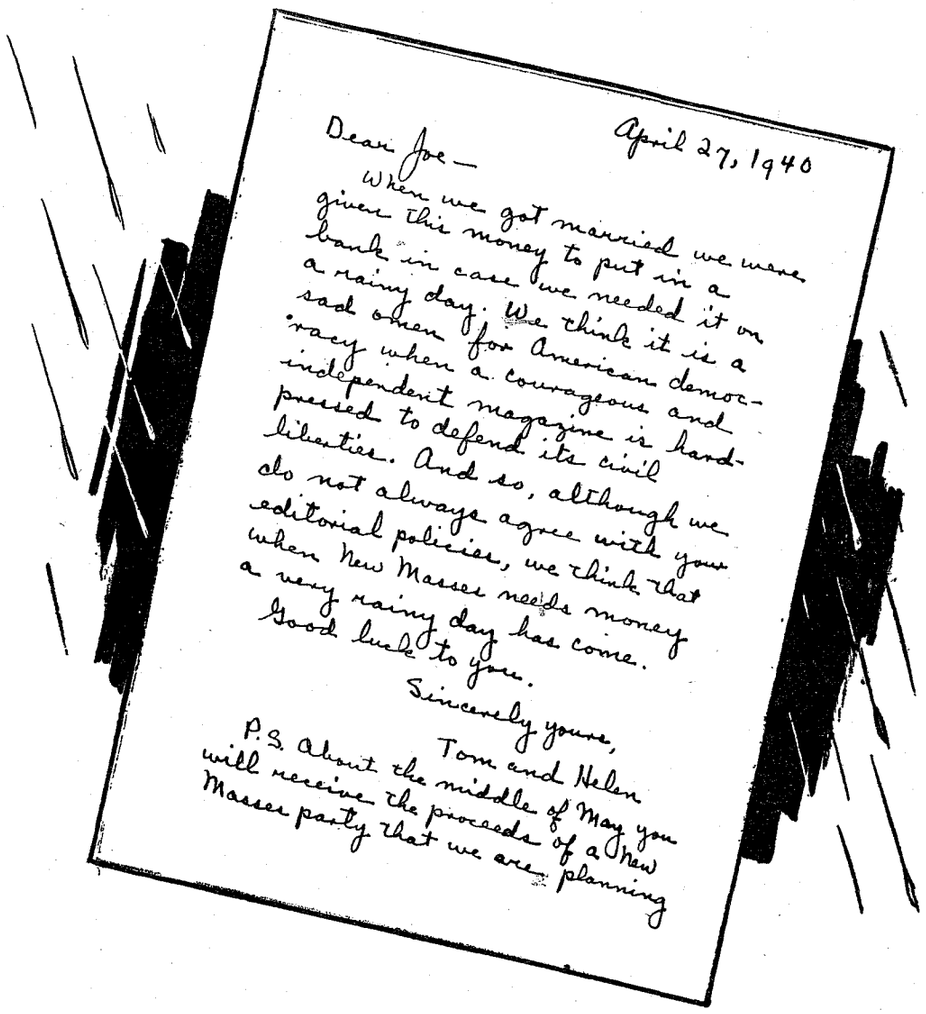
"A Very Rainy Day Has Come..."

LAST Monday we got a letter no other magazine in America could get. It came to one of our editors from two young friends who had just been married a few weeks before last September—a few honeymoon weeks before war broke out. Look at this letter, which stopped us, made us humble and yet fiercely proud of our responsibility:



April 27, 1940

Dear Joe—

When we got married we were given this money to put in a bank in case we needed it on a rainy day. We think it is a sad omen for American democracy when a courageous and independent magazine is hard-pressed to defend its civil liberties. And so, although we do not always agree with your editorial policies, we think that when New Masses needs money a very rainy day has come.

Good luck to you.

Sincerely yours,
Tom and Helen

P.S. About the middle of May you will receive the proceeds of a New Masses party that we are planning

ENCLOSED in the letter was a check for $100. How would you feel if you got a letter like that? The same way we do. There's nothing in the wide world that will keep us from trying to live up to it. Here was young America, honest, alert, hopeful to build a useful, happy life. But what are their chances if the young husband will be toting a gun within a year or two, perhaps to die in a foreign land in a war he never asked for.

"A very rainy day has come," Tom and Helen wrote. NEW MASSES will die if you do not come to its rescue as this young couple did.

It has pulled through the last few weeks because of such folk as these two. It can be saved if the thousands of Toms and Helens who read our magazine come through, and *at once*.

(Please turn to page 26.)

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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★

But 95 Percent Say "No"

EVERY important columnist and commentator last week was saying the same thing. Arthur Krock, Jay Franklin, Hugh Johnson, Raymond Clapper, William Philip Simms, Walter Lippmann—each in his own way discloses that the President has something to say to America, but doesn't know just how to say it. There's something on his mind, which he speaks of in private, but hasn't the courage to mention in public. In the same week, there appeared an innocent-looking pamphlet, *The American White Paper,* obviously inspired by the White House. Every sentence of it is studied; every semicolon is deliberate; every paragraph bears the mark of oh-so-careful rereading by the smart young men of the State Department.

And what is it that the President hesitates to say? It is that the policy of helping the Allies "short of war" has already brought the nation closer to the war than it realizes. The policy of unneutrality, the administration's policy of *encouraging the war,* now compels its creators to take another step—they want to revise the Johnson act, as Senator Adams of Colorado has already suggested. They have plans all prepared to distribute the gold holdings, a clever way of financing big business sales to the Allies from the public treasury. They are letting the cat out of the bag with studious subtlety: Louis Johnson, assistant secretary of war, revealed last week exactly how the railroads plan to deliver an American expeditionary force to the Atlantic Coast. And the aircraft monopolies are deliriously happy: the administration last week arranged a $200,000,000 sale for them of 2,450 planes and three thousand motors. Bethlehem Steel reported banner earnings. Is it our fault, asks Alfred P. Sloan the $1,500-a-day chairman of General Motors, if this war means good business?

But alas for the upper classes, there is a fly in the ointment. According to the latest Gallup poll, 95 percent of the people—no less than last October—want no part of this war in April. Deep down among the people there is a rooted spirit of resistance to any involvement abroad.

Thus, the entire country stands at a new moment in the struggle against war, a moment of great conflict between the incompetent, grasping minority on the one hand, and the great patient majority on the other. The minority has the press in its hands; every miserable labor lieutenant of capitalism with a shred of influence among the common people—see the record of Matthew Woll—can be expected to do his part; the man in the White House will lead them all. And the Dies committee and the Department of Justice will coordinate with the general strategy of the campaign. On the people's side there are ranged great popular organizations, a new and ever-clarifying spirit, a resistance against fatalism, a mood of increasing confidence. Let this spirit expand, let this mood unfold, let the organizations of the people grow and confound the enemy with their strength—then there need be no doubt of whose will be the ultimate victory.

Strategy in Norway

THERE seems to be little doubt that the Germans are entrenching themselves in southern Norway. Despite illusions created by the British Admiralty, and faithfully circulated in this country, the Skagerrak is still a German strait; Nazi troops continue to arrive. British bombardments at Stavanger and Oslo have not loosened the German hold or prevented the Nazis from extending their lines along the Swedish border. Well supported by their air force, the Germans have made rapid progress up the strategic Oester and Gudbrand valleys from Oslo to relieve Allied pressure at Trondheim.

It seems clear that the British did land forces at Namsos, above Trondheim, and at Andalsnes, below. Joining the hard-pressed Norwegian troops they made an effort to "pincer-off" the town of Trondheim and dominate its strategic fjord which cuts halfway across the Norwegian waist. The Germans seem to have defeated one wing of this thrust at Steinkjer; a sensational dispatch by Leland Stowe of the Chicago *Daily News* for April 25 claims that British troops from Namsos were few in number, not equipped to meet the German air attack, and without the service of the Allied air force to harass German communications. Such reports may be true. They should serve to convince the American public more deeply than ever that they had better keep their own distance from the Allied General Staff.

But this is not necessarily the decisive factor in the war for Norway. One must take a longer view. The Allies wanted this extension of the front, but their main strategy at this time is not necessarily the occupation of Norway itself. Their landings outside Narvik, their pressure at Trondheim, as well as their diplomatic activities, indicate that they plan to extend the war to Sweden, perhaps very soon. To be sure, they want the Swedes to come in on their side; they expect Swedish troops to hold the iron mines in the north out of Nazi reach. They calculate on forcing the Nazis to extend themselves unduly: a German thrust against competent Swedish forces, plus whatever the Allies can put through beyond Narvik, would be a larger problem for the Nazis than Denmark or Norway. To achieve this objective, the Allies must, of course, coordinate their naval and air force operations, press the Nazis wherever possible in Norway, and be certain of Swedish support. Considering the day-to-day developments, this larger perspective must be borne in mind.

Two Fronts

SUCH considerations occupied the important Allied Supreme War Council meeting on April 22-23. Its decisions can be summed up as (1) spreading the war wherever possible, (2) bearing down more heavily on the British and French peoples. Two events last week therefore complement each other. One was the Duff Cooper speech, the other the Sir John Simon budget. Duff Cooper, substituting for Churchill (who was absent at the War Council meeting), was unquestionably not speaking his own mind alone. He fully disrobed the imperialist character of the war; he spoke of "the crimes of the whole German people." He said "it was wishful thinking to drive a wedge between the German government and the German people"; he called for "total war." No one can claim any longer that the Allies are fighting to bring "democracy" to the peoples of Central Europe. Victory for the Allies, in Duff Cooper's own words, can mean only the most brutal military domination over Central Europe. This is the real British and French war aim. Goebbels will make good use of Duff Cooper's speech.

But if the Allies have disclosed their real intentions toward the German people, Sir John Simon's budget establishes equal clarity at home. The second war budget totals $9,334,500,000—40 percent of total British government revenues now go for war purposes, a horrible commentary on the "democratic civilization" that Americans are asked to defend. Sir John Simon did not yet propose the Keynes plan, which provides for compulsory kickbacks from the worker's pay envelope to the government. But in his budget taxes on whisky, tobacco, matches, and beer will be increased. The same goes for postage stamps and telephone calls. A sales tax is instituted for wholesale-retail transactions which will result in higher consumers' prices. The budget pretends to be democratic by limiting corporation dividends. But the limitation will not be enforced for several weeks: meanwhile, British big business is hastily declaring "juicy melons" for the upper classes. The Pressed Steel Corporation, for example, has already declared a 27.5 percent dividend for the year. Dividends will be restricted to the three year average of 1936-39. British big business made handsome profits in those years; the Simon budget hardly affects their current income and does not tap their accumulated wealth. As in this country, the war has meant cash for the "better people"; nothing for the poor.

To cap it all, the "Trojan horse" rumpus is being cleverly exploited to whip up sentiment for the suppression of the Communist Party. The Labor leaders are contributing their miserable mite; the government's announcement of measures against "those who hinder the war effort" presages a duplication of the dirty job done in France.

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Allied-Soviet Relations

ONE of the most interesting concomitants of the serious beginning of the war is the shifting attitude toward the Soviet Union, especially in France, where newspapers are talking about the Red Army with a caution and respect that are reminiscent of the summer of 1939. Lord Halifax would make it appear that the USSR has proposed new trade discussions; actually, it was the Allies who interrupted, by their Finnish fiasco, the trade discussions of last October. The Soviet Union is certainly not averse to trade improvement; Molotov said as much in his speech of March 29. The Allies need materials such as timber, which is now cut off in Norway and Sweden. From the Allied point of view, it would be logical to try to cancel some of the anti-Soviet antagonisms they themselves created. But the crucial question in Scandinavia revolves around Sweden's role. That must be at least *one* of the major problems in Allied-Soviet relations. It would appear contradictory to us that an improvement of the atmosphere between London and Moscow can take place (always within the framework of Soviet neutrality in the war) if the Allies intend to force Sweden into belligerency.

A Forgery Fit to Print

BY THIS time it ought to be taken as axiomatic that whenever the commercial press starts writing about Soviet plans for conquest of China, something foul is being prepared for the Chinese people in the anti-Soviet capitals of the world. On April 22 that pious jade, the New York *Times,* did a job which must have been the envy of Hearst. It published an alleged Soviet map of China showing large sections of Chinese territory included within the USSR. An accompanying story by Hallett Abend, *Times* correspondent in Shanghai, told a tale of how these maps are being posted on highways leading from Siberia into China by Soviet truck drivers transporting military supplies.

The very next day the *Times* published a letter from Frederick V. Field, secretary of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations, branding the map "a clumsy forgery" and analyzing in detail the glaring discrepancies in both the map and the Abend story. One can guess the inspiration of this forgery, coming as it does from Japanese-controlled Shanghai and from such a source as Hallett Abend, one of the Tokyo Foreign Office's favorite American correspondents.

Two days after the publication of the Abend fake, an Associated Press dispatch from Tokyo lifted the curtain a bit on the real threat to China. According to the AP, Britain and Germany are competing behind the scenes for the role of chief appeaser of Japan. Trade concessions, "gradual relaxation of British-French opposition to Japan's policy in China," "withdrawal of British stabilization of the Chinese Nationalist currency," and "cooperation of the British commercial interests in China with the Japanese and the Japanese-sponsored regime of Wang Ching-wei" are visualized. These steps were foreshadowed in the recent speech of the British ambassador to Tokyo, Sir Robert Craigie, in which he declared that Britain and Japan have the same objectives in the Far East.

The Spivak Case

WHY the big papers are keeping mum on the outrageous Spivak case is one further mystery in the whole affair. Here is one of America's foremost journalists whose career has been marked by generous contributions to public service: he has unearthed Nazi spies, ferreted out Japanese plots, written unforgettable indictments of the Georgia chain gang atrocities. Today he is being hounded for his services, badgered by the public enemies he has so ably exposed.

The status of his case today is this: after Governor James of Pennsylvania signed extradition papers to send Mr. Spivak to Kansas on another libel charge, the writer's lawyers sought a writ of habeas corpus. Common Pleas Court Judge Patterson, in Pittsburgh, denied that writ. His decision will be contested before the Superior Court of Pennsylvania within the next two weeks. If the ruling is affirmed, the defense plans to take the case to the highest court in the state, and, if necessary, to the US Supreme Court.

It is as obvious as the Hitlerian lock on Congressman Dies' forehead: sinister men are in cahoots to harass Mr. Spivak to a point where he is put out of commission. All who stand opposed to the hosts of fascism in this country have an immediate task: to help Mr. Spivak beat back his foes. The country needs, more than ever, the type of work he can do. And the public enemies know it.

Lewis at the Negro Congress

JOHN L. LEWIS once again spoke the minds of millions in his address before the National Negro Congress, held in Washington last weekend. The leader of the CIO has a special talent for articulating with impressive eloquence the moods and aspirations of our people. Standing before the representatives of the most harassed and exploited section of the population, his speech was a challenge to that whole evil system which torments and degrades fifteen million black Americans; it was a pledge of labor's solidarity in this fight; it was a warning to those who seek the solution of America's problems in foreign wars.

As in his speech to the American Youth Congress in February, Lewis demanded that the Department of Justice act to test the constitutionality of the poll tax laws that deprive millions of Negro and white citizens of their voting rights. He also spoke with tart irony of J. Edgar Hoover's "fantastic stories of plots against our country by foreign powers" while Ku Kluxers and lynchers go unpunished.

Lewis devoted more attention to the question of keeping America out of war than in any previous speech.

> There are people in this country [he said] who want to get us into war. They are growing bolder. Mark you, soon they will have worked up their courage to talk about going to war to save Iceland and Borneo. We must not go to war. If it is our mission to save Western civilization, then let us begin by saving it right here in our own country.

Lewis showed what needs to be done on the home front. He made no direct reference to the new political alignment of labor, the farmers, the Negro people, and the old-age pension groups which he projected in his West Virginia speech April 1. But his invitation to the Negro Congress to establish a working agreement with Labor's Non-Partisan League points in that direction.

Jim Crow, Incendiary

NATCHEZ, Miss., perhaps more than any other Southern town, exists on its tourist appeal of ante-bellum mansions and gardens. Jim Crow guards the twittering lady visitors from contact with Negroes. Last week Jim Crow brought tragedy to Natchez. He herded hundreds of Negroes into a ramshackle dance hall of corrugated iron, with boarded windows and a single exit, and burned some 250 of them to death. It was one of the worst fire disasters in US history. Natchez police suspect incendiarism; but instead of going after Jim Crow's paymasters they are rounding up *Negroes,* using a trick familiar in the South—to protect the real criminal by blaming the victims of the crime.

Editorials in the majority of newspapers were of the "shocked into awareness" order, but the "awareness" referred only to negligence in observing fire-department regulations. The Natchez fire has far more meaning than this—its flames light up a whole social system, of which slum housing for Negroes, ruling class self-protectiveness, and the lynch spirit are the most conspicuous features.

Wages, Hours, and Profits

THE Barden amendments to the Wage-Hour Act may have been passed by the House when this issue of NEW MASSES appears. If so, 1,500,000 workers in food-processing industries, as well as a large section of white collar workers, are threatened with loss of all benefits from the act. As James Morison's article last week on "The 30 Cent Debate" pointed out, the law itself may be seriously crippled through restrictions and further exemptions. Some members of the House farm bloc have accepted Barden's double-cross-eyed argument that farmers will benefit if workers in the processing industries receive less than 30 cents an hour. Those gentlemen may pay for their attitude by seeing the appropriations for farm parity payments cut from the Agricultural Supply Bill.

FDR's last-minute suggestion that the Wage-Hour Act was pretty nice and maybe Congress had better not tinker with it right now can hardly be taken as a sincere effort to save the law. Last year the administration,

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through Mrs. Mary Norton, chairman of the House Labor Committee, decided that instead of fighting Mr. Barden and his friends it would "appease" them by offering amendments of its own to weaken the law. The same strategy was used in the case of the Smith amendments to the Wagner act. Now Mrs. Norton is making a great show of indignation and surprise over the Rules Committee's finagling to favor the "drastic" Barden and Smith amendments against hers. The lady doth protest too much. Labor is not deceived by her cries.

While workers are being asked to eat less and labor longer, big business watches the profits roll in. Two hundred and fifty corporations report that net income for the first three months of 1940 increased 50 percent over the same period last year.

The Dies Menace

MARTIN DIES is now exhibiting his spring line of stoolpigeons. One of them, Thomas Humphrey O'Shea, expelled from the Transport Workers Union as a company spy, was shown before, in 1938; he has been taken off the shelf again in the hope that this time he can be sold to the American public. They are a familiar breed, these O'Sheas and Fred M. Howes and Ezra Chases. They have the typical stoolpigeon's weakness for the sensational; what they don't know—and it's plenty—they invent. These carbon copy J. B. Matthews' operate on the old Hitler theory that the bigger the lie the more likely it is to be believed. One of the O'Shea tidbits, concocted with the aid of Rep. J. Parnell Thomas (real name Feeney) of New Jersey, was that the Transport Workers Union trained members in the use of guns for the same reason that the Christian Front organized target practice for its members.

Dies himself showed his hand when he demanded that the CIO rid itself of Communists. The latter he defined as follows: "The only way we can find out if they are Communists is by their tactics and activities within the union with reference to the whole party line." In other words, every union member who supports progressive policies is *ipso facto* a Communist.

While Dies rants about Communist "Trojan horses" the evidence mounts concerning his own plottings against democracy. His violations of elementary constitutional rights have brought him into open conflict with the courts. The bill against organizations with "international affiliations," sponsored by Dies and his man Friday, Representative Voorhis, has been denounced by the Catholic *Commonweal*. The Mexican Communist Party has just charged that the Dies committee is working with William Randolph Hearst to finance a fascist uprising under the leadership of Gen. Juan Almazan.

The International Workers Order has launched a nationwide anti-Dies campaign. To stop Dies is to stop the storm troopers of war and fascism. It can be done.

Readers' Forum

Debs' Canton Speech

TO NEW MASSES: The urgent need today, before it is too late, is for the expression and formation of a progressive, anti-imperialist public opinion. By examining a speech delivered by Eugene V. Debs at Nimissilla Park, Canton, O., in June 1918, we may be guided in that direction.

In June 1918 the United States had been at war for over a year. The dogs of hate, jingoism, Wall Street profiteering, and suppression of labor and all progressives were riding high. In that fevered atmosphere Debs' courage was equal to the task of stating his position on officially unpopular subjects.

Commentators refer to the effectiveness of Debs' oratory. The Canton speech started with a tribute to imprisoned comrades, including Tom Mooney and Charles Ruthenberg, victims of the hysteria of the times. Aware of the fact that federal agents were in the crowd, he continued, "I realize that, in speaking to you this afternoon, there are certain limitations placed upon the right of free speech. . . . I may not be able to say all I think; but I am not going to say anything that I do not think."

Shortly after this speech Debs was arrested, tried, and convicted under the Espionage Act as amended by the so-called Sedition Bill. Both in his Canton speech and in his remarks to the jury at his trial he took an unequivocal position in support of the Russian Revolution. At the trial, he said, "I have been accused of expressing sympathy for the Bolsheviki of Russia. I plead guilty to that charge. I have read a great deal about the Bolsheviki that is not true. I happen to know that they have been grossly misrepresented by the press of this country."

At Canton, Debs spoke on the subject at greater length: "Here in this gathering I hear our hearts beat responsive to the Bolsheviki of Russia. Yes, those heroic men and women, those unconquerable comrades who have by their sacrifice added fresh luster to the international movement; those Russian comrades who have made greater sacrifices, who have suffered more, who have shed more heroic blood than any like men or number of men anywhere else on earth, they have laid the foundation for the first real democracy that ever drew breath of life on God's footstool. And the very first act of that immortal revolution was to proclaim a state of peace with all the world, coupled with an appeal, not to the kings, not to the emperors, not to the rulers, not to the diplomats, but an appeal to the people of all nations, the Allies as well as the Central Powers, to send representatives to a conference to lay down terms of peace that should be democratic and lasting. Here was a fine opportunity to strike a blow to make democracy safe in the world. Was there any response to that noble appeal? And here let me say that that appeal will be written in letters of gold in the history of the world. Was there any response to that appeal? Not the slightest." Stirring words, these. Debs was quick to recognize the great historical role of the Russian Revolution.

Turning to the home front, Debs dealt with the disaffection of certain intellectuals and remarked that this was not a surprise to him. Industrial unionism and unfettered political action by labor received his warm praise. As was his custom in important speeches, Debs delivered an inspiring and impassioned plea for organization and class-consciousness among the workers as the most effective weapon in the class struggle. He denounced the imperialist nature of the war and hammered at the policies of the "Wall Street Junkers" and their government. He exposed the two big political parties then preparing for an off-year election.

At his trial Debs read from Wilson's *New Freedom* and showed how far the President had strayed from his avowed ideals in following an imperialist war policy. It is a striking parallel to the course now being followed by President Roosevelt.

In his Canton speech Debs remarked: "A change is needed. Yes, yes. Not of party but a change of system; a change from despotism to democracy wide as the world. A change from slavery to freedom. A change from butcherhood to brotherhood." Gene Debs had grasped the meaning of history and of his time—and his words have not lost their significance. Today we are faced with the problem of bringing the truth to ever larger numbers of people. We can join Debs in saying, "The truth will make the people free. . . . The truth has always been dangerous to the rule of the rogue, the exploiter, the robber. So the truth must be suppressed." That is our task today, to spread the truth, relentlessly and on an ever broadening scale.

New York City. LEONARD HIRSCH.

Pan-American Imperialism

TO NEW MASSES:—April 14 was celebrated throughout the Americas as the golden jubilee of the establishment of the Pan-American Union. Our so-called free press, while paying lip service to the Pan-American Union, very effectively concealed from the American public the fact that on this date was to be consummated one of the crowning achievements in the history of US imperialism in the western hemisphere during the past fifty years. Namely, the establishment of the Inter-American Bank.

Since the fiscal economy of the Latin-American countries is based upon silver, it was originally proposed by Mexico to create a Pan-American bank for the purpose of facilitating international payments in settlement of debit balances with silver. As now constituted, this inter-American bank is simply a glorified holding company for American imperialism with the capital stock underwritten by the US Treasury in the interests of Wall Street. The charter is to be issued by none other than the US Congress; and it has for its true purpose the exercise of economic and political control over the internal affairs of the Latin-American countries in order to exploit their populations and natural resources for the benefit of Wall Street and Allied imperialists. Recently, several South American countries, among which are Argentina and Brazil, sensing the danger to their national sovereignty, have very properly rejected the scheme.

It is interesting and highly significant that, although twenty-one nations are supposed to be interested in this bank, the draft of the Articles of Convention contains the joker that, in order to secure a charter from the US Congress, the Articles of Convention must be accepted by only five governments who must subscribe to 145 shares of stock. It is obvious that the "inter-American bank" would be a closed Wall Street corporation.

The truth is that, despite the moral platitudes and cynicisms uttered by President Roosevelt in his Pan-American Day speech, the past fifty years of American imperialist aggressions in Latin America have reached the point where these states are living under the shadow of coercion and invasion.

Brooklyn, N. Y. H. ZUCKERMAN.

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Paris Gazette

Samuel Sillen reviews Lion Feuchtwanger's latest and best novel. Emigres from Nazi Germany carry on their anti-fascist work in pre-fascist Paris.

PARIS GAZETTE, *by Lion Feuchtwanger, translated by Willa and Edwin Muir. Viking Press. $3.*

In a preface to the Soviet edition of his collected works, Lion Feuchtwanger divided his novels into three groups. The first group—*Power, The Ugly Duchess,* and *The Pretender*—portrayed a conflict between the individual and society, "the rebellion of the highly individualistic being against a social order which is becoming increasingly irrational." The second group, or the Josephus trilogy, dealt with the conflict between nationalism and internationalism. (The solution of the national problem in the USSR, Feuchtwanger explained, had helped him to understand that a man can be devoted to a nation and yet retain an international perspective.) The title of the final group, *The Waiting Room,* symbolically suggests the conflict in an age of transition between the world of unreason and the world of reason. It began with *Success* and *The Oppermanns;* and it is now provisionally concluded with *Paris Gazette* (*Exil,* in the original). Feuchtwanger expressed his belief that he would one day, not too far off, be able to add a fourth volume which might truly complete the picture: "The source of my confidence that I shall be able to write the concluding novel, *Return,* is the existence of the mighty Soviet Union."

The Waiting Room employs the same historical technique as the earlier cycles, despite the fact that its subject matter, the events in Germany between the wars of 1914 and 1939, is more nearly contemporary. In the earlier novels Feuchtwanger attempted to depict reality in terms of historical parallels. The results of such a method were not always felicitous, particularly with the host of minor imitators whom Feuchtwanger inspired in all countries. For the novel of "analogy" tends to fall between two stools: either the parallel between former times and our own becomes too rigid, with a consequent distortion of history, or the parallel remains so obscure that it fails to serve its avowed purpose of enlightening the present. But in developing the historical technique, Feuchtwanger has restored certain neglected values to post-war fiction: a broad social canvas, a sense of historical forces working through dramatic individuals and events, an appreciation of perspective and accuracy, and most important of all, perhaps, an emphasis on storytelling as the basic component of good fiction. In *Paris Gazette* the virtues of Feuchtwanger's historical method find their best expression.

For in this novel Feuchtwanger has abandoned the contemporary approach to history in favor of the historical approach to contemporary materials; and he has applied the method more successfully than in either *Success* or *The Oppermanns.* The story deals with German refugee life in the Paris of 1935. It makes use of two motifs derived from actual event: the kidnaping of a refugee journalist by the Nazis, and the sabotage of an anti-fascist newspaper by Hitler's agents. By weaving these incidents together, and by creating a Paris setting, Feuchtwanger has been able to portray fascist as well as anti-fascist characters in direct conflict. The focus of the struggle is the *Paris Gazette,* organ of the German opposition. Despite its small circulation, the *PG,* as it is called, has become a major source of vexation to the Nazis. The kidnaping of the brilliant journalist Friedrich Benjamin, far from silencing the voice of *PG,* makes the little paper fight all the more bravely and effectively. The gifted musician, Sepp Trautwein, who had previously been an "unpolitical" man, is drawn into the struggle. His barbed attacks on the Nazis are widely quoted. As a result of *PG's* persistence, the Benjamin affair becomes an international incident. The Nazis send an emissary, Konrad Heydebregg, to arrange for the suppression of the paper. Two Nazis in Paris, the correspondent Erich Wiesener and the aspiring diplomat von Gehrke (Spitzi!) compete with each other in assisting Heydebregg to clean up the *PG* nuisance. By bribes and intimidation they persuade the publisher, Gingold, to fire Trautwein. The *PG* staff resigns, forms a new paper, carries on the good fight to a victorious conclusion. This is an embarrassingly skimpy outline of a story prodigal in character and incident, which consumes 860 pages and sixty-four chapters.

LION FEUCHTWANGER, *author of "Power," "The Ugly Duchess," "Success," and "Moscow 1937," has written his best novel in "Paris Gazette."*

It is ironical to reflect that while the Nazis failed to suppress the anti-fascist paper by trickery and bribery, the French government has since banished it by a simple decree. In the days of the developing Popular Front, France was a haven for the composer Sepp Trautwein, the Greek scholar Ringseis, the editor Heilbrun, and the poet Tschernigg; today they are forced to seek a new refuge from concentration camps. Those emigrants who in this story adopt a conciliatory strategy toward Hitler, today no doubt advocate a hush-hush policy toward Reynaud. And the cynical opportunists like Erich Wiesener, with "a good nose for authentic power," have their counterparts in the servile foreign correspondents of other countries.

Indeed, I think that Feuchtwanger's novel may be read most fruitfully as a depiction of human beings reacting variously to the breakdown of the old order, whether the specific event be the collapse of the Weimar republic or the blackout of democracy in France. The exiles of this book constitute a microcosm in which the forces of distintegration and creation of the larger world are sharply focused. There were two words for exile in the old German language, Feuchtwanger reminds us. *"Recke"* meant an outlaw; *"Elend"* meant a miserable creature driven from his land. The outlaws are the voluntary emigrants; they could not, even if they were allowed to, tolerate a regime of barbarism without incessant rebellion. But the *Elende* were compulsory emigrants, forced to flee because of an entry in a birth register or some other accident rather than because of a conscious hostility to an oppressive regime; they were prepared to accept the new order, but were not permitted to. The strong were strengthened by the crisis of exile, the weak made weaker. Some were broadened, others narrowed. Every human virtue and vice was magnified: heroism and cowardice, self-sacrifice and selfishness, nobility and pettiness.

In Sepp Trautwein, the central character, Feuchtwanger describes a now familiar type. Sepp is the liberal artist who is torn between his music and his need to fight the destroyers of culture. Throughout the book he moves from a hostile to a friendly attitude toward the political position of his son Hanns, a Communist; in the end, he describes himself as a "sympathizer." With practical participation in the struggle against fascism has come not only a more realistic understanding of politics, but

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a more vital creative power in music. One feels that he is honest and courageous enough to survive the test of war which other liberals are disastrously flunking. Hanns goes the whole way in abandoning the illusions of Weimar. In him Feuchtwanger portrays the enthusiasm and sterner realism of the post-war generation. In the symbolical ending Hanns departs for Moscow where his interest in architecture will find the expression denied to it elsewhere. Anna Trautwein, on the other hand, cannot make the long pull; her suicide is the final expression of a heartbreaking inability to adapt herself to exile.

Others react in different ways. The poet Tschernigg shifts from extreme nihilism and anarchism to extreme middle class ideals of comfort and possession. The talented young author, Harry Meisel, is filled with a furious contempt for the vulgar majority. Herr Gingold, publisher of *PG*, sells out to the fascists and salves his conscience with prayers and charity. Quite a few live completely in the past. Like the shades Odysseus visited in Hades, says one character, "They still carry on down there as they did while they were alive, and hate and love one another as before."

The fascist characters are portrayed with devastating objectivity. Erich Wiesener is an intelligent adversary who hates the Nazis in his heart (and in his private journals) and plays their game with superb finesse. If in the end he loses his part-Jewish mistress, Leah de Chassefiere, his ambitious son Raoul, and his own self-respect, he can at least assure himself that when he drops he will drop from the highest branch. The vain and pompous Spitzi is a shattering example of the incompetent person who can get far because he has won the confidence of The Bear. And Heydebregg, the lumbering Puritanical emissary from Berlin, reveals the essential dullness of Nazi officialdom. These fascists, it is interesting to note, were accepted in the highest French circles.

Feuchtwanger can produce a wide range of effects. He is brilliantly satirical at moments, tender and sympathetic at others. Above all, he is a penetrating analyst of the contradiction between the motives and words of people, the subtle devices by which men substitute "good" reasons for "real" reasons; he is sensitive to the fraudulent, and yet free from cynicism. But I find in *Paris Gazette* the same difficulty of overabundance that one feels in his other novels. He multiplies his materials too extensively. Only the remarkable clarity of his narrative style saves his novel from the prodigality of his imagination.

One is aware, however, that despite the tremendous scope of the book, working class characters are again virtually absent from Feuchtwanger's picture. The difficulty here is a real one. The world of the *PG* is inevitably a world of intellectuals, diplomats, journalists, professionals, and middle class people generally. At the same time, a fully adequate historical treatment of the theme necessarily involves a more detailed portrait of the class which is the actual motive power in the anti-fascist fight. Feuchtwanger has not coped with the problem of relating the experiences of the *PG* to the experiences of the German or French proletariat. Both the historical validity and the artistic mastery of the novel are to that extent impaired. The class that will make *Return* possible needs more emphasis.

But *Paris Gazette* is itself a token that in a sense fascism never did conquer. In exile, the strong *do* grow stronger. In exile, Feuchtwanger has written his best novel.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

China Memoirs

THIS IS OUR CHINA *by Mme. Chiang Kai-shek. Harper & Bros. $3.50.*

MME. CHIANG KAI-SHEK is the Wellesley-educated second wife of the generalissimo, one of the famous Soong sisters. Her volume is a collection of articles, speeches, travel notes, letters, and exhortations dating from before and after the 1937 invasion. There is a peculiar feminine eloquence in her simple style, a deep concern over the fate of China, especially of its women and youth, a fund of great passion, a courage of conviction in her indictment of the misery and barbarism which Japan's war has brought to her people.

This is, however, a rather uneven collection. Intended to give a rounded impression of her personality, some passages are so unequal to others that the total effect is unsustained. Many pages are devoted to a graphic description of Mme. Chiang Kai-shek's travels through the interior of China, the province of Szechwan, and the southwest. Another whole chapter is given over to a "Tale of Old China," a fanciful legend that bears no relation to the rest of the book. Some passages are dated too far back: it is a little chilling to read of Mme. Chiang Kai-shek's experiences in the company of her husband on one of the "bandit extermination" campaigns in 1934-35. One remembers how many valiant patriots were murdered in the fratricidal struggle of those days while the invader made steady progress in the North.

On the other hand, the spirit of resistance permeates the volume; its author is continually exhorting her people to greater unity. She insists upon persistent education of the youth, personally organizing schools and refuges for them. She presses for the mobilization of China's women in the independence cause; she cries out against those nations who call themselves defenders of the democratic cause and yet themselves continue to assist totalitarian Japan.

There is a deep religious overtone in the volume. Both Mme. Chiang Kai-shek and her husband are Christians: their personal faith is an integral part of their great role in China's struggle for freedom and independence. But quite clearly, she has no consistent program for China after the war. There must be a great reconstruction. At some points, however, she is quite critical of industrializa-

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tion; she sees the problem of the cooperation of the landed and business classes all too simply. Her attitude toward the investment of foreign capital is almost purely diplomatic. But there is in this volume a deep communication of the dignity of China's cause, seen through the eyes of one of her foremost women. It leaves no doubt which side in the Far Eastern war must achieve the final victory.

JOHN STERNE.

Not Our War

LABOR AGAINST WAR. *Labor Research Association, 80 East 11th St., New York City. 10 cents.*

LABOR says, "This is not our war." Since last September, when the conflict started, one labor group after another has declared itself, in statements and resolutions, against America's involvement in the European war. In a booklet titled *Labor against War,* the Labor Research Association publishes sixty of these declarations, which should be required reading not only for workers but for all American citizens. Most of the statements point out the dangers of wartime price boosts and profiteering, suppression of civil rights, interference with collective bargaining and other labor activities. Many oppose such steps toward war as loans to belligerents. "This record," says the LRA, "does not pretend to be comprehensive, covering only sixty labor groups. It is based on an incomplete survey of the labor press. We believe that it covers a representative body of labor opinion in this country." Other groups—student, farm, church, peace, political, youth—which have taken an anti-war stand are listed, and their statements may be published later. The LRA also invites readers of the booklet to send in copies of anti-war resolutions on the part of unions or other organizations in their vicinity.

JUDITH SAYRE.

Joads of the Tenement

THE TRIUMPH OF WILLIE POND, *by Caroline Slade. Vanguard Press. $2.50.*

THE city slums also have their Joads, as homeless as the Okies since a refuge in which the bedbugs have prior property rights is no more a living abode than a truck or migratory shack. In fact the slum Joads are not even granted the tiny alleviation of occasional sunlight and air permitted their rural allies in wretchedness. It is of these dwellers in the tenement tiers of filth and darkness that Caroline Slade writes, using her first-hand knowledge as a social worker. The Pond family lives in "The Beehive," in an unnamed city. There are seven children to be fed on Willie Pond's few dollars for ditch-digging on WPA and a pitiful relief allowance, and Willie himself has t.b. Miss Slade gives a forcefully calm picture of the Ponds' misery and their despairing struggle against degradation. When Willie is taken to a sanatorium the family gets its first break, through the transfer of its "case" from the relief office to the Child Welfare Board, which looks after families whose fathers are officially declared incapable of working. In Miss Slade's novel the CWB turns out to be a fairy godmother, restoring the Ponds to the decency of a real home and adequate food and clothing. The trouble is that Willie recovers; he is a "wage earner" again (without a job) and, rather than see his wife's Child Welfare pension taken away, Willie cuts his throat. This is his "triumph" over relief authorities, illness, society itself.

The Triumph of Willie Pond, however, is less a protest against the social setup than a tract against "bad" social workers. Miss Slade is too inclined to blame the meanness and obtuseness of one relief investigator for all the Ponds' troubles. And the Ponds themselves—did they never discover how far from alone they were in their militant loathing of the indignities put upon them; how they might have used that militancy instead of laying it aside at the first generous gesture from a welfare board? Other Ponds have learned, like the Joads, that "We're the people." Miss Slade omits that lesson, the most important of our time, and the book suffers accordingly.

BARBARA GILES.

War Maps

AN ATLAS HISTORY OF THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by J. F. Horrabin. Alfred A. Knopf. $1.50.*
WAR ATLAS. *A Headline Book. The Foreign Policy Association. 25 cents.*

MAPS have become indispensable for a fuller understanding of the war. Newspapers have recognized their importance in a totally new way these last few months. Maps are subject to change almost without notice these days, and yet a good handbook will enable the diligent reader to understand the background and significance of such changes even if the map before him is outdated.

One of the latest booklets in this field comes from J. F. Horrabin, well known for his *Atlas of Current Affairs;* another from the Foreign Policy Association as the latest of its Headline Books series. Horrabin's atlas consists of ninety-nine plates; his running commentary is good, and he has a particularly full section on the economic and financial aspects of the war, the resources of the powers, and the role of the colonies. The Foreign Policy Association has borrowed its maps from Mr. Emil Herlin of the New York *Times.* Several plates have been added to make a total of forty-two; Varian Fry contributes the running commentary, somewhat more extensive than Horrabin's but often, unfortunately, in the New York *Times* vein. Plate 26 on the threat to Scandinavia maintains the hokum of a Soviet threat to Sweden and Norway, which Soviet spokesmen have repeatedly refuted. Similar misinformation comes in passages dealing with Finland. But perhaps the most outrageous distortion will be found in Plate 5, which purports to give the line-up in the war. Germany is shown

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in black, the Soviet Union in black run through with stripes. The legend has the Soviet Union "associated with Germany"; but Italy, Denmark, Spain, Hungary are given in white, which the legend explains as "neutral." The commentary is not so blunt, but the map certainly tells a lie. Molotov specifically formulated the Soviet position with great precision in his speech of March 29. Only people who are themselves unneutral will insist that because the Soviet Union maintains neutrality toward *both* belligerents in this war, that makes it partial to Germany's side. Only a mapmaker for the New York *Times* would have the gall to distort the Soviet position in the very same map where Italy, or Hungary, or Denmark (of all countries!) is described as "neutral." Even in mapmaking, apparently, truth faces the same obstacles as in the pages of the *Times* itself. Too bad the Foreign Policy Association commits itself to such distortion.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

British Writers Speak

"A GREAT responsibility devolves upon writers to uphold the objectives of social development, to stimulate the desire for an extended democracy, to clarify the real issues at stake, and to ensure that the principles which inspired the democratic movement in the past are not submerged beneath the obfuscation and illusion of war," says the British section of the International Association of Writers for the Defense of Culture in its first official communication since the outbreak of war in Europe. The statement, dated March 1940, has recently been released by the League of American Writers, which is the American section of the International Association.

"The whole country is becoming increasingly bewildered by the rapid deterioration in the standard of living, the disintegration of social and family life, the curtailment of grants for social services, the crude censorship of news, the government's secretiveness in the conduct of war, and its obstinate refusal to say 'at what point or in what way we can be said to have achieved our aim,'" declare these British writers. They pledge themselves to:

1. Combat deceptions, the falsification of facts, the illusory ideas propagated by the press, the British Broadcasting Co., or the war politicians themselves.
2. Uphold militantly the principle that freedom and culture must be defended by their extension as well as by political protest.
3. Investigate and protest against the assaults on our fellow writers of other nationalities, upon other sections of the Association, upon the rights of criticism and free expression of opinion.
4. Take an active part in the development of culture, e.g., by lectures and discussions among members.
5. Add its [the Association's] influence and energy to the work of other organizations which are striving to maintain the course of social and cultural progress.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

A Season on the Boards

Alvah Bessie calls the roll and names the winners . . . Hollywood goes to war: James Dugan previews forthcoming propaganda films . . . . Joseph Szigeti, master violinist.

THERE are two or three items still on the fire that we have yet to see—notably, Robert Sherwood's topical play about Finland (*There Shall Be No Night*), a new one by Wild Bill Saroyan (*Love's Old Sweet Song*), and the announced Leigh-Olivier *Romeo and Juliet*—but aside from these the drama season may be said to be on its last legs. It has *been* on its last legs since it started some seven months ago, although a great deal of money, considerable talent, and much ingenuity have gone down the bottomless pit in trying to convince us that there *was* a drama season. Rarely has there been one that offered less in solid entertainment, in native talent.

Of some forty-five productions that I have personally recorded in these pages (a few never made the grade because they closed before the review was written), five were revivals and forty were new works. This is a considerable body of writing and represented a formidable investment in time, money, and mediocrity. Nothing that could remotely be called a "trend" or a tendency could have been observed this past fall and winter, and the spectator was left only with a persistent wonderment. Over and over you would ask yourself, How in the name of David Belasco do such things get produced? or, Why didn't someone tell Mr. X,Y,Z, A,B,C, etc., that this was scarcely worth his while? Echo answers. Rather than rehash the entire list, I would like to make a few additional observations about those productions that merited attention when they were on the boards, and those still running that would repay your visit to the theater.

Of the defunct, Robert Ardrey's *Thunder Rock* represented the most original developing talent of the season, although at this remove the play seems somewhat thinner than it did when it was produced. There could be no mistaking the fact that it was in many ways jejune, static, and unconvincing as a dramatization of everyman's inner conflict in these times—withdrawal or participation. And there could be no mistaking the fact that it also represented an integral search for new ways of saying on the stage things that are almost impossible to say. Ardrey has talent (which he is probably sick of hearing), and he has vitality. When he achieves a fusion of execution and material, he will have more to say. Reported to be at work in Hollywood (at $1,000 a week), he can afford a bitter smile at the irony of the belated recognition recently offered him in the Sidney Howard Memorial Award, for "promising" work.

The much-touted Maxwell Anderson came up this year with *Key Largo,* an overloaded and sententious exposition of an inherently valid conflict—how is a man to compensate for cowardice? Politically suspect and slanderous of the cause of loyalist Spain, his play satisfied neither your hunger for understanding of people—which the drama at its best has always offered—nor your desire to be entertained. It had less to offer to its audience in the way of human character, intelligibly presented, than Paul Osborn's unpretentious comedy, *Morning's at Seven,* which attempted no more than a presentation of small people living out their small lives in a small town. Mr. Osborn, at least, knew his people and loved them; Mr. Anderson, with an enormous reputation and a hankering after the integrity that comes more easily to less self-conscious writers, bilked his audience.

Of the remaining plays that have gone the way to Cain's Warehouse, the most rewarding (and indeed the most satisfying production of the season) was the revival of Sean O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock.* If you did not see it, you ought, at this point, to kick yourself three times and promise to mend your ways at the first opportunity. Barry Fitzgerald and Sarah Allgood made a Gaelic holiday of this brilliant tragicomedy of the Irish lower classes during the "troubles," and we had, for once, the perfect synthesis of material and presentation. O'Casey's talented compatriot, Paul Vincent Carroll, disappointed us this time in *Kindred,* a diffuse and confusing play that possessed only one well drawn character, which was played brilliantly by Arthur Shields.

But the greatest disappointment of the year (from the standpoint of what we expected) was, of course, Clifford Odets' *Night Music* which, despite the agitation and polemics of its director, Harold Clurman, represents its author's thinnest work to date and a pivotal point in his career. The revolutionary ardor which Odets crystallized in *Waiting for Lefty,* and which made *Awake and Sing!* a nearly perfect play (though *Paradise Lost* has certain attributes that rate it even higher in the scale of dramaturgic values) is temporarily absent from his writing. Like many another writer, I imagine, Odets feels these days that he is sitting on the edge of a volcano, waiting for something to happen; something which will happen soon enough. He is still the most richly endowed of our American playwrights, and anyone who says that he is through is talking out of turn. Hence it is typically ironical that he should have been compared, even in these pages, to Elmer Rice (although in *Night Music* he merited the comparison with Rice's *Two on an Island*—both plays treated serious matters with astonishing superficiality) and, elsewhere, with William Saroyan, whose theater works so far displayed actually stem from Odets. Both *The Time of Your Life* and the earlier *My Heart's in the Highlands* cribbed liberally, I believe, from the Odets way of looking at contemporary life.

Aime

Of the plays still on the boards as this is written, you might profitably spend your money on three or four. None is any great shakes as drama, but all offer certain entertainment value. Most controversial, of course, is the Hemingway-Glaser *The Fifth Column,* which has the magnificent acting of Lee J. Cobb to offer (a rewarding experience) and something of the struggle in Spain. Hemingway should be chewing his fingernails for what he permitted the Theater Guild to do to his original script, lacking as that version may have been in dramatic values. For the Guild came perilously close to making an anti-loyalist play out of a work by one of Spain's most stanch supporters.

For sheer entertainment, see *Ladies in Retirement,* which, after a second look, still seems to me the pleasantest evening in the theater you could find. This is a murder melodrama, and is therefore somewhat contrived; but it enjoys the talents of a perfect cast, brilliant direction, sound writing, and occasionally deeply understood characterizations. It is pure theater, all the way through. Good theater, likewise, is the Living Newspaper play, *Medicine Show,* which dramatizes the statistics of public health in these enlightened states with conviction and considerable power. (Take your doctor to this one, and watch the characteristic reaction if he is over thirty-five.)

Heavenly Express, the Albert Bein fantasy about the American Tramp, was reported on last week, and there is little to add to what

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I said then. Imperfect in many ways, the play invokes a mood of nostalgia and poetic intuition; and there are John Garfield (Julie to those who remember him when he was with the Group) and Philip Loeb in two brilliant acting parts. I cannot make up my mind, when it comes to spending money, between James Thurber's *The Male Animal* and Sylvia Regan's *Morning Star*. Both are liberally hoked, both are good sentimental writing, but of the two I think the Regan talent has more to offer in the way of eventual accomplishment on our stage. She is a serious dramatist, and her defects are the defects of inexperience and inadequate taste. Mr. Thurber is purely meretricious. But if you are flush, you might see them both, for both will entertain you. Also, it would do you no harm to watch Ingrid Bergman in the current revival of Molnar's *Liliom*.

And you might pray for a better season next time; or better still, you might all sit down and write us a rip-snorting anti-war play, that will knock people out of their seats and throw them in the aisles. And if you cannot write one yourself, start a letter-writing campaign and petition Odets, Steinbeck, and Hemingway to collaborate on one. We are going to need it. ALVAH BESSIE.

Mars in the Movies

Hollywood educates the world—for war.

IT IS popularly believed that because America entered the last war in Europe she will not enter this one. This is not very comforting philosophy when you realize that there is a spirited attempt to get us into the new one precisely because we were there before. The latter maneuver finds favor in Hollywood where a group of pictures about the first world war are in production. *The Fighting 69th* has already appeared and the same studio, Warner Bros., is now preparing a two million dollar production of *The Amazing Story of Sergeant York*. Sergeant York himself, a quixotic Tennessee farmer, is cooperating on the facts of his life, and vouchsafes the calming statement that the film "Is not to be a war study, but a character study of my life in three phases: Tennessee before the war, France and the Argonne, and back home to my Tennessee mountains." But I do not underestimate the persuasive powers of the studio heads in shortening the first and third episodes in favor of the legendary deeds of the sergeant in France. Twentieth Century-Fox is planning to make a film biography of Andre Maginot, the profound benefactor of civilization whose monument is the Maginot Line. Columbia has a mysterious production under way entitled, *21 Days Together*, starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. If this turns out to be the story of a British officer on furlough I shall not be surprised.

The March of Time is finishing its first feature, *The Ramparts We Watch*, without

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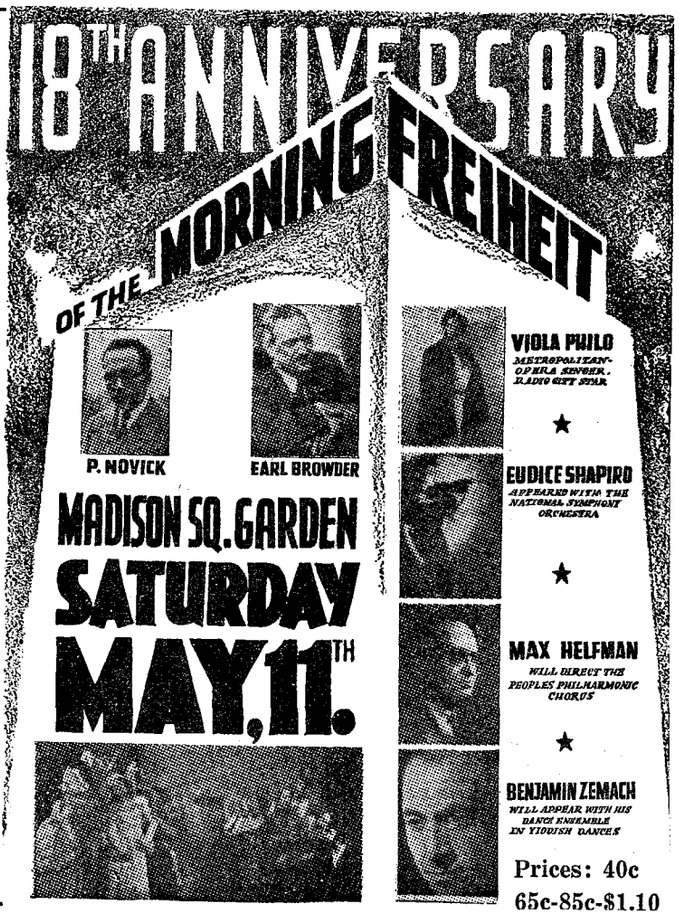

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benefit of undue publicity. The story is rumored to be a "reenactment" of America's entrance into the first world war.

The British empire aspect of things is being handled overtime. Warner has a biography of *This Man Reuter,* founder of the semi-official British propaganda agency, Reuters, another dubious character to be reminded of at this particular moment. There will be the usual helping hand from Hollywood to the empire in keeping the Indian people in line. Twentieth Century-Fox has *Khyber Pass* in preparation, among other soldiering epics like *One Man Army,* which may be Zanuck trying to beat Warner to Sergeant York.

Also purchased for this season's production are the following suggestive titles: *As Nazi Tourists See Us* and *Dunant,* a biography of Henry Dunant, founder of the Red Cross, for MGM; *Bombay Uprising* and *Siege of the Alcazar* for Universal; and *Fighting Sam,* the story of Sergeant Dreben and the world war, for Twentieth Century-Fox.

Here are some of the American films which will be made in one of the belligerent countries during the production season: MGM will make in England a new Robert Montgomery vehicle called *Busman's Honeymoon* from the pen of Lord Castlerosse, Winchell of the *Sunday Express.* Paramount will make *Rings on Her Fingers,* with Elizabeth Bergner, and *The Admirable Crichton.* MGM has just engaged an English producer, Ivar Goldschmidt, and the film capital is busy with various benefits for Allied relief, now that the Finnish racket is done with. The ubiquitous empire propagandist, Alexander Korda, is in Hollywood preparing four Hollywood productions and two to be made in Britain. Almost $4,000,000 has been promoted by Korda from A. P. Giannini and other coast bankers, including $400,000 for the specific purpose of picturemaking in England. Is anybody worrying how Britain is getting foreign exchange?

Australian income from American films has been insured by the freezing of all grosses by the Australian government as "investments for the duration of the war."

Mussolini is still the pal of producers, with MGM trying to get past Benito's confidence game to make *Quo Vadis* in Rome. Numerous French directors are already working in Italy, including Julian Duvivier, who is making a film about the "glories of ancient Abyssinia."

Marlene Deitrich is being sought for a role in the Comedie Francaise. Peyton Watkins, head of the Twentieth Century-Fox fan mail department reports foreign requests for star photos have increased since the war began, with residents of certain cities that have been evacuated forwarding their new addresses so as not to miss their photos. The Hays office has relaxed its control over sexy still pictures to accommodate the fighters on the Western front. Movie advertising taboos which control such matters as the exact degree of inclination of the horizontal kiss are going by the boards as witness the newspaper

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ads on MGM's *Strange Cargo*. Binnie Barnes, British star, has taken her phone number off her thumbnail and has replaced it with a British flag.

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ALTHOUGH it was hardly necessary, Joseph Szigeti proved once more in his recent New York recital that he is practically unrivaled as an interpreter of violin literature. Breezing through a program whose musical and technical demands were of the broadest range, Mr. Szigeti held his Carnegie Hall audience spellbound for almost three hours.

Ably assisted by a string ensemble from the New Friends of Music Orchestra and his excellent accompanist, Andor Farkas, Mr. Szigeti displayed his wide interpretive powers in a refreshingly unconventional program. Whether it was the broad lyricism of the Bach D Minor Concerto, or the intellectualized romanticism of the Brahms G Major Sonata, or the modernisms of Bartok, Mr. Szigeti captured the meaning and style of each and conveyed it with utmost clarity to his audience. You would have to travel far and wide to hear a better sustained phrase line, a more singing tone, or such sensitivity to pitch. Mr. Szigeti is enjoyable because he is an intelligent performer who discards all pose and mannerisms in order to emphasize essentials. Technically finished, he uses technique only as a medium to clarify the musical content, not as a goal in itself.

Three contemporary composers were chosen for the interesting second half, Bartok (Rhapsody No. 1), Stravinsky (Chanson Russe) and Ernest Bloch's "Baal Shem" suite. Written in a frankly nationalistic manner, the Bartok was the most successful. A spirited, sparkling piece, flavored with complex rhythms and daring harmonies it demonstrated that folk music is a healthy, vital source. Bartok's utilization of Hungarian peasant music accounts in no small degree for his deserved popularity. The Bloch suite, despite some very moving passages, suffered from a sameness of mood and color. Mr. Szigeti also played as one of his many encores, the Danse Russe from Petrushka. The contrast with Chanson Russe (1937) was amazing. Even though the Petrushka piece was written some twenty-five years before the Chanson Russe, it revealed once again the hearty, vigorous Russian character that Stravinsky developed from the Moussorgsky tradition which made him one of the most gifted of twentieth century composers. The challenging rhythms and exciting dissonances of Petrushka have been watered down to a neo-romantic piece of the "Dark Eyes" genre. How the mighty have fallen!

Whatever one's doubts about the values of some of the numbers performed one fact was indisputable: Szigeti is a master violinist.

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Ballad for Americans

THE Federal Theater Project New York musical show, *Sing for Your Supper,* had a rousing finale called "Ballad of Uncle Sam." The words were by John La Touche, a twenty-three-year-old Virginian. The music was by Earl Hawley Robinson, a lanky ballad singer from Seattle.

So stirring was the piece that when a WPA chorus sang it for the first time, the rest of the cast got to their feet and cheered themselves hoarse. Robinson sold the song to the Columbia Broadcasting System. Because it's the kind of musical folk epic with excerpts from the Gettysburg Address and the Declaration of Independence, Columbia retitled it "A Ballad for Americans." They then got the great Negro baritone, Paul Robeson, to sing it on the Sunday afternoon "Pursuit of Happiness" program.

The results were startling. The demonstration after the performance in the studio went on for twenty minutes. Columbia's telephone switchboards in New York, Chicago, and Hollywood were swamped with calls. Thousands of letters poured in. Three weeks later Robeson sang the ballad again on the same program. Ecstatic fans in the southwest sent chain letters to friends urging them to listen in; the New York studio audience broke precedent by shouting "Author, Author!" until shy, blushing Robinson took a curtain call with the great Negro actor-singer. Shortly afterward Metropolitan Opera star Lawrence Tibbett featured the ballad on the coast to coast CBS Ford hour. The ballad is now a hit from Maine to California. MGM, owner of the movie rights, plans to put it into a Judy Garland–Mickey Rooney musical, *Strike up the Band.*

But the biggest and the best news was Victor Records announcement that "Ballad for Americans" sung by Paul Robeson together with a great chorus has been put on two ten-inch records (four sides) for all of America to hear and thrill to.

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